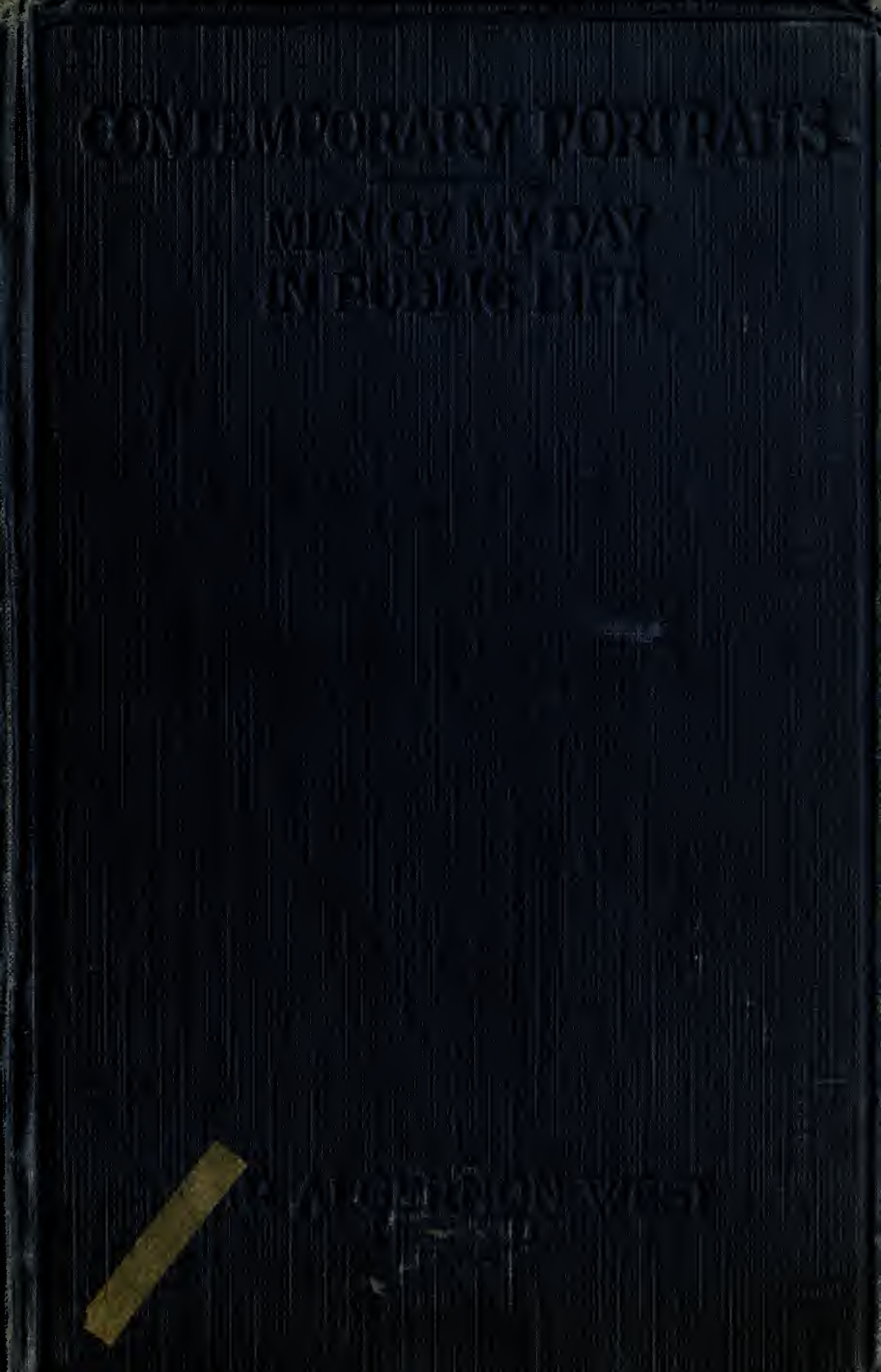
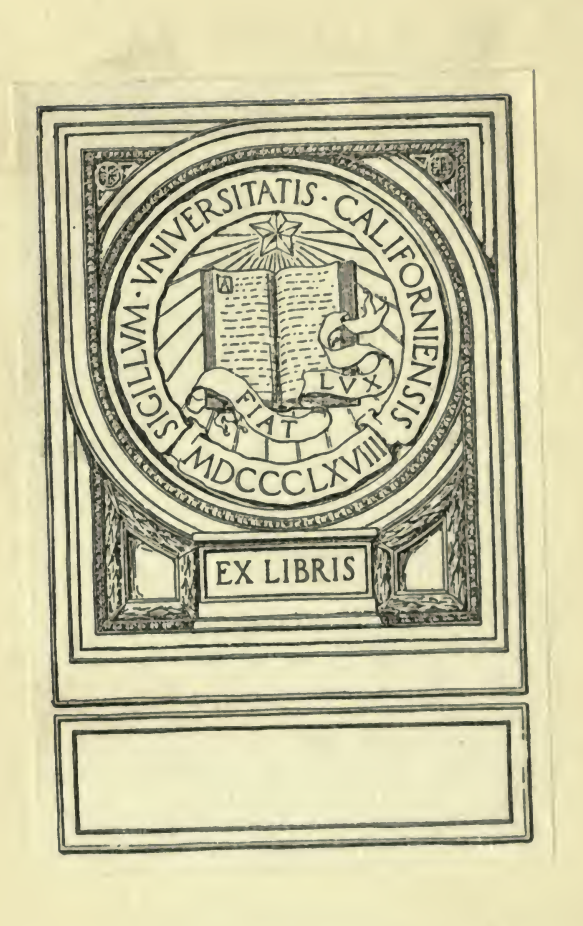

CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS
MEN OF MY DAY
IN PUBLIC LIFE


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CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

RECOLLECTIONS

SIR CHARLES WOOD'S ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA

MEMOIR OF SIR H. KEPPEL, G.C.B.

ONE CITY AND MANY MEN

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



SIR ALGERNON WEST

Frontispiece

CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS

MEN OF MY DAY IN PUBLIC LIFE

BY

THE RT. HON. SIR ALGERNON WEST
G.C.B.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

With 24 Illustrations

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD.
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The excellent Lord Verulam has noted it as one of the great deficiencies of biographical history that it is for most part confined to the actions of Kings, Princes, and great personages, who are necessarily few; while the memory of less conspicuous though good men have been no better preserved than by vague reports and barren eulogies.

ISAAC WALTON.

First published in 1920
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PREFACE

I HAVE ventured, by the kind permission of Mr. Murray, to reproduce an article on Lord Welby which appeared in the "Cornhill Magazine," and a slight history of No. 10 Downing Street, which as the Mecca of the Civil Service appears to me to be a fitting conclusion to these sketches.

Shortly after Sir Robert Morant's death appeared in the "Times" an obituary notice which described better than I could his services to the State, and this I have been allowed to reproduce.

ALGERNON WEST.

INTRODUCTORY



CALIFORNIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

"Let us now sing the praises of good men."

THE brains and hands that have put before us from time to time the lives and actions of distinguished men of this century are now at rest, and an attempt to supply some omissions in the memoirs of Justin McCarthy and of George Russell and others must be made by feebler brains and feebler hands.

In these days of somewhat exaggerated appreciations and biographical notices, from which even the living are not exempt, there are many histories of those who have played parts of more or less interest in the world.

Politicians, poets and authors, men of science, sailors and soldiers, painters and actors, have not found any lack of writers ready to proclaim their merits from the housetops and in the Press; but I have

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

come across little, if any, mention of those who have served the State in the unostentatious duties of the Civil Service. Many of these in my long career I have had the honour of knowing. It has been well said that " the permanent heads of departments never think of going into Parliament. They regard the parliamentary statesmen who are set to rule over them much as the Bengalese regard the English, as persons who are less intelligent and less instructed than themselves, but who are nevertheless to be obeyed." I imagine that if anybody, however well read, were to cast his eyes over these pages, he would be surprised to find a number of men of whom the world knows little, who, at salaries which would be considered small for a chief clerk in a fashionable drapery establishment, abandoning the highest prizes of political life, have worked in the service of the State—" having learnt to prize the quiet lightning deed more than the applauding thunder at its heels which men call fame." These men are those who have not sought what Tennyson calls " the blaze and blare of fame." These whom their enemies call bureaucrats have

obtained from their work and administrative capacities a reputation envied by all civilised nations in the world.

Mr. R. H. Hutton, the famous editor of the "Spectator," once said: "Surely there is no bureaucracy in Europe so pleasant and so far from the domineering manner as the English."

Herbert Paul, in his "History of England," well describes the position of the Civil Service in this country. He says: "The country is governed in ordinary times and for everyday purposes by these permanent members of the Civil Service, who work for both parties with equal loyalty, and in some cases with equal contempt. The principle of continuity is identical, and it is that which enables a statesman to preside at once over an office of which he knows nothing. He is taught and assisted, though of course he cannot be directly controlled, by the most efficient profession ever organised since the business of government began."

In giving a few sketches of distinguished Civil Servants I have not been unmindful of Walter Bagehot's advice, that "brevity

is as necessary in a memorial as on an epitaph." [1]

Lord Tennyson, admiring Edward Grey's fine perorations, asked him if he wrote them beforehand, and he said "No," but when the time came for their delivery, he always found that the arms came where the legs ought to be. To compare small things with great—it exemplifies my difficulty in putting in anything like chronological order the sketches I have tried to make.

Carlyle has written so much and so often in his own peculiar language of what a biography should be, or should not be, that I hope nothing I have written will come under the head of a biography. What I have said is meant only as a slight record of a few of those whom I have for the most part met in official life, and many of whom were my intimate friends.

There is an old proverb, and most of old proverbs are true, that there are as good

[1] A recent utterance of Mr. Asquith's which is already classical makes me feel that I have shown too great temerity in attempting to draw these sketches, for he says that "to have a bad memory is a misfortune, not a crime; but people who have bad memories should not attempt to write their own or other people's lives."

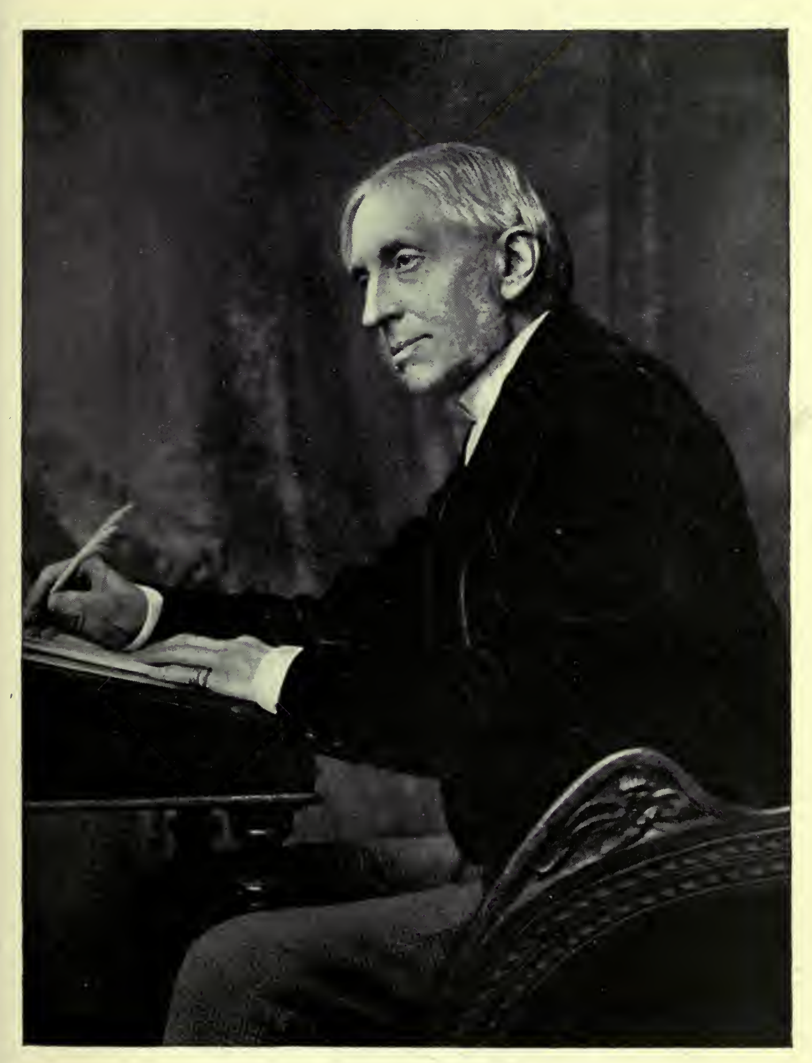
fish in the sea as ever came out of it, and anybody trying to write a chronicle of the good work done by the Civil Service would find it impossible to do justice to his theme.

It may be well, before alluding to those whom I have known since the time when I entered, as a temporary clerk, the Inland Revenue Department in 1852, until my retirement from its chairmanship in 1889, that I should very shortly speak of the changes that have taken place in that period. A deduction was then made for pensions from all salaries, however small, and if a clerk were to die in harness, and could claim no pension, all he had contributed during his years of service—it might be forty years—reverted to the Exchequer. This was clearly unjust, as was shown by Lord Mayo, who brought the matter before the House of Commons. Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who at that time was Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of remedying the injustice of the existing plan, dispensed with any deductions whatever, but I did not get back the small contribution I had made!

Previously to 1853 there was no examination necessary for entry into the Service,

but in that year there was instituted a qualifying examination ; and I was, I think, the last who entered without any examination whatever. Sir Charles Wood on one occasion kindly gave to me a nomination for a cousin of mine, who was hopelessly plucked in writing and spelling. My aunt wrote to me a grateful letter for what I had done for her son, adding how lucky I had been to have got in before those horrid examinations, which I did not take altogether as a compliment, though I agreed with her !

Bernal Osborne, who was at that time Secretary to the Admiralty, congratulated me also on my luck, and soon after this there came a vacancy in the office, and the son of a great friend of his, the famous Jack Spalding, was nominated. He, as we all knew, had not had the advantage of a too liberal education. We juniors all trembled for the result of the examination he would have to undergo, but Bernal Osborne said that the first examination under the new system was so important that he should conduct it himself, which he did to the utmost satisfaction of the candidate, who



SIR LOUIS MALLET

8]



was reported to have passed with flying colours, especially in theology. It is only just to say that a better official than Augustus Spalding never existed. This state of things was too good to last, and examinations were hereafter to be held before Civil Service Commissioners. Three candidates were nominated to compete for one vacancy.

Sir William Hayter, then the clever and astute Secretary to the Treasury, was not to be so easily done, so he kept in reserve two very dull boys who he felt sure could never succeed, to run in competition with his friend, whom he wished to be appointed; and this ruse went on till at last one of his pet idiots was finally successful, but in 1870 the great change, which I have spoken of elsewhere, came when all situations, with some few exceptions, were opened to public competition; but other changes had come. At the time of the Crimean War, the administration of war affairs, for which at that time the Colonial Office was responsible, was transferred from that department to a new Secretaryship of State, and in 1885 Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, then occupying that office, effected a radical

change by the abolition of the autocratic rule of the Commander-in-Chief, then the Duke of Cambridge, and the substitution of the authority of various heads of departments under the Secretary of State. The Excise Board, as Dr. Johnson described its members—" wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid "—with sundry boards such as Hackney Carriage Boards, etc., were transferred from the City to Somerset House and united under the Board of Inland Revenue. The old Court of Directors of the East India Company ceased to exist as a public department when the Government of India was taken over by the Crown, and the new India Council, after a temporary residence in Cannon Row and the Westminster Palace Hotel, was established in the new offices in St. James's Park.

The old War Office in Pall Mall, where the Automobile Club now exists, has been transferred to Whitehall, and the statue of Sidney Herbert has been moved and now stands as a pendant to the statue of Florence Nightingale in front of the Guards Memorial, surmounted by the emblem of Victory with laurel wreaths in her hands, which a cruel

critic at the time of its erection likened to a woman playing quoits which she was trying to pitch on the head of the Duke of York.

The office in Cannon Row when vacated by the India Office became the headquarters of the Civil Service Commissioners until their duties so increased that they were moved to Burlington House, and the new buildings in St. James's Park have absorbed many outlying offices. The history of their erection is curious. Barry was the architect of the Treasury in Whitehall, which is essentially classic in treatment. He certainly designed Bridgewater House, which in its frontage is one of the finest in London, and the Travellers' Club, the treatment of which, especially on its southern aspect, is excellent. But he was overlooked, and Gilbert Scott, the prominent architect in the Gothic style, was selected to build the new offices. With this view and intention he prepared his plans, which were accepted, but Lord Palmerston coming into office wished for a building more suitable for the purpose for which it was intended, and insisted on a structure after the Italian School. Gilbert Scott thereupon set himself to prepare

plans which were a mixture of Byzantine and Renaissance after the model of a Venetian palace, but Lord Palmerston was firm and insistent on having none of what he called a "mongrel affair," and determined on having a building essentially Italian. When Barry designed the new Houses of Parliament, he, with his Renaissance predilections, made the river front too regular and formal, so Pugin was called in to collaborate with him in order to break it up more in accordance with Gothic tradition. Hence it was that the fine Victoria Tower was conceived, and the beautiful octagon lantern and the Clock Tower were the result of Pugin's collaboration.

The Admiralty with its beautiful screen was the work of Robert Adam in 1760, and its Board-room adorned with the sculptures of Grinling Gibbons still remains; but the hideous additions to it when wireless telegraphy supplanted the old semaphores have made the façade towards the Park a terrible example of the architecture of the Victorian era.

THE WORK OF THE CIVIL SERVICE



CHAPTER II

THE WORK OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

LECKY, in his delightful "Map of Life," lays great stress on the advantages of Tact. No doubt it is a splendid asset in a man's character, smoothing his passage through life and leading to success, but I still maintain that work and the love of it is the noblest gift that can be granted and that best repays itself.

In the slight sketches I have made of those who have achieved the reward of well-spent lives, there is not one who has not worked. The common phrase used to all those ending their official career is the hope that they may live for many years to enjoy their well-earned rest. There is no such thing as rest in this world, or in the next, I fancy—if rest means idleness. The man who has worked through his life exclaims, as Macbeth did: "Blow wind, come wrack, at least we'll die with harness on our back!"

Burne-Jones, whom I met a few days before his death, ridiculed the idea of a man dying of overwork; quoting Mr. Gladstone, he said, "'Change of labour is to a great extent the healthiest form of recreation': unsuccessful work might kill, not successful work." That morning he had become tired of painting his big picture—now, alas! never to be finished—and rested himself by having recourse to a small one.

Take those of whom I speak and see how they have worked till the night came. We have noticed this, moreover, that, if we except a few great men of power and genius, it will be found that the world is governed by those who keep themselves in the background.

I recollect a great reform in the Post Office which was concluded just as a new political Postmaster-General had come into office—a reform which had taken perhaps years of hard work to elaborate—and one of the party newspapers proclaimed to the world that it was the result of the new Government! Well had it been if the Government had been left to organise and direct affairs which from knowledge and

experience they knew how to deal with, instead of their being handed over to outsiders gathered from the four quarters of the world who were ignorant of the principles of finance and the rudiments of administration. Had this been so the daily occurrence of extravagance and discreditable scandals might have been avoided.

Mr. Asquith told us the other day that "there has never been a more extravagant or less successful experiment in administration than the attempt to supersede our old Civil Service by the importation of all sorts and kinds from what is called 'the business world.'" A writer of great ability and vast experience writes :

"The old Civil Service and its great traditions have been nearly swamped by the influx of new departments and politicians holding office for a few months, during which they can gain no knowledge of their business, but follow the example of others, their grandiose plans, their vast expenditure and their army of new men commending them for promotion. The civil servants, both new and old, find themselves at the mercy of transitory leaders."

Yet our permanent Civil Service contains some of the best brains in the country ; and I wish I could solve the following enigma that meets and confounds me in glancing over these pages :

How does it come to pass that so many men, poets, scholars and authors, added to reputations in the Colonial Office—Sir James Stephen, Sir Henry Taylor, Herman Merivale, Sir Frederick Rogers, Sir Robert Herbert and Sir Robert Meade ? We all recollect how Rawdon Crawley was appointed to a Colonial governorship through the interest of Lord Steyne, and what a servile Press said of it ; but such things do not happen now, and so the mystery remains —a coincidence I suppose, and nothing more.

This volume does not pretend to be in any way a history of the Civil Service or even of the distinguished men who have adorned it. It consists of only a few and scanty records of what I have seen or heard during the forty years in which I had the honour of being myself a humble civil servant. The sketches do not profess to be accurate in chronology, or indeed in any detail.

Lord Rosebery, in his splendid "Life of Chatham," treating of biography, says he would like to know "how a man talked and possibly what he thought, what was his standpoint in regard to the grave issues of life, what he was in his hours of ease and what he enjoyed, how he unbent: in a word what he was without his wig and bag and sword, in his dressing-gown and slippers, with a friend, a novel or a pipe"; but I have not ventured to touch on the private lives of any of the men I have spoken of, but class them all as gentlemen, and Newman's definition of a gentleman is what I mean. And now all these whose work I have so sketchingly touched have passed into the silent world, leaving behind them an imperishable record of splendid and unselfish work, which the coming generations will do well to follow; and none of us need despair when we read the names of those still alive who will afford flashlights to guide us over the dark seas and dangerous shallows that are to come.



MY ENTRY INTO THE SERVICE



CHAPTER III

MY ENTRY INTO THE SERVICE

I AM not sure that I did not enter the Civil Service at one of its worst periods, when many of the clerks really deserved the jokes that were levelled at their heads. Rumour gives one of them, probably unfairly, to the credit of Sir Thomas Farrer: "Why are Government clerks like the fountains in Trafalgar Square? Because they play all day from 10 to 4." Or take Charles Lamb's description of his day's work at the East India House, where the clerks who presented themselves before ten were given their breakfasts:

> "From ten to eleven
> Eat breakfast for seven,
> From eleven to noon
> Think I'd come too soon;
> From noon till one
> Think what's to be done;
> From one to two
> Find nothing to do.
> From two to three
> Think it'll be
> A very great bore
> To stay till four."

" Punch " also was severe :

" Clerk in Government Office, being offered a cup of coffee after lunch, declines with horror—' My dear fellow, it would keep me awake all the afternoon.' "

" What are your holidays ? " " Oh, ah, every day from 10 to 4 and all day Sunday."

" The Owl," a paper brought out about this time, edited by Evelyn Ashley, who was Lord Palmerston's secretary, Drummond Wolff, Lord Wharncliffe and others, gave " advice to a young clerk by an old one." "Avoid," it said, " the reputation of writing quickly, otherwise the longest thing will be given you to copy, and you will be left working while your colleagues go to dinner. Establish on your first arrival the reputation of coming late ; if punctual at first you will find it difficult to correct so pernicious a habit. Recollect that a clerk worthy of the name obtains three leaves annually : regular leave, extra leave, sick leave, and so on. Remember how Dickens talked of the young man's office day, in which he stepped out a good deal and stepped back very little. Call your chief by his Christian name—or



SIR ARTHUR HELPS



nickname—if shortsighted call him Buz; if lame, Hoppy is not inappropriate."

But even then the work was done somehow. Things were, I hope, improving when in the year 1852 Sir James Graham, then First Lord of the Admiralty, gave me a clerkship in his office, and I was put under the care of John Heneage Jesse, subsequently the historian of the Georges. He was a hardworking, capable head of a department, and an excellent example for a young man to follow. At that time it was difficult to believe that in his earlier days he had passed a "vie orageuse" in company of Lord Waterford and the brothers Frank and Charles Sheridan. It was of one of these brothers that Lady Dufferin, their sister, paraphrased the song of the "Fine old English Gentleman," treating on his irregularity in his habits and hours of attendance:

"And when asked where he'd been all night—
For he scorned to tell a lie—
He'd been sitting up with a poor sick friend
To the best of his memory;
This fine young English gentleman all of the modern time."

Jesse was fond of telling us of the doings of his early days. On one occasion a niece

of his had been hurt at Vauxhall by a rocket-stick falling on her, and was taken by Jesse to a well-known Doctor Macan, in Parliament Street, who was sceptical as to the relationship and made very light of the affair. This annoyed Jesse, and he was determined to have his revenge. So, as he and some friends were coming back in an omnibus from a dinner at Greenwich on a bright summer morning, they drew up at the doctor's door and, knocking violently, implored him not to waste a moment, as one of their friends was lying in a fit on the floor of the omnibus. Down came the doctor in his dressing-gown and slippers, and was shoved into the carriage, which was driven to the top of the Haymarket, where they turned him out amid the jeers of the drunken revellers, to run home as best he could.

When in the Admiralty I made friends with Frederick Locker, who in those youthful days was very original and entertaining. He always wore gloves while performing his clerical duties, for fear, as he said, he should soil his hands and have to ring the bell and send for the chief clerk if he wanted a clean

towel or a fresh piece of soap. In later life he delighted the world with his brilliant verses and cheery "confidences." After his second marriage his muse became more silent, and in the visitors' book at Newhaven Court appear these lines :

> "As Delilah was to Samson,
> So is Jane to Locker Lampson."

In those early days when I was a junior clerk in the Admiralty my duties were confined to index-writing and copying letters, and I never saw anybody of so exalted a rank as an Under-Secretary, though the chief clerk used sometimes to tell me that the First Lord was waiting for the document I was copying to take to the Cabinet, and warning me that H.M. the Queen was very particular about the writing on a non-commissioned officer's warrant !

It was not long, however, after the Crimean War broke out that I was put into the First Lord's private office as assistant to Lord Northbrook, afterwards Viceroy of India, and remained with him until I was appointed Private Secretary to Sir Charles Wood. Lord Northbrook put Sir Charles

Wood much above anyone whom he had seen at work as an administrator, and he had filled more offices than any living man. His wisdom and patience, his unbounded belief in humane and just principles of government, his boldness of initiative and persistence in execution, carried India safely through the critical transition from the rule of the Company to the rule of the Crown. Wood became Secretary of State for India in Council, and had the difficult task of organising the new Indian Department. He was admirably adapted for the task in health, quickness and ability. He was supported by a council of the greatest Indian soldiers and administrators, whom he managed with singular tact and judgment, and the staff was recruited by the ablest men chosen from the old East India Office. Mr.—afterwards Sir Thomas—Seccombe was the Financial Secretary, and Kaye the Political Secretary of the Foreign Department. The latter was author of "The Sepoy War," a record which Augustine Birrell described as being crammed full of activities and heroism, and which forced upon the mind the healthy conviction "that, after all, it is

bravery, truth, honour, loyalty and hard work, each man at his post, which make this planet habitable."

The Permanent Under-Secretary was Herman Merivale. He had been a boy of extraordinary precocity, and unlike the usual precocious boys, who are generally failures and disappointments in later life, his abilities continued to shine, for he won all the highest honours at the University, and was the first holder of the Ireland Scholarship. When still at the Bar he had delivered a series of lectures on the Colonies by which his great value became known, and in 1847 he was appointed Assistant Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and so remained until the retirement of Sir James Stephen, when he became the Permanent Under-Secretary. When holding that office it was said of him, in Herbert Paul's "History of England," that he was one of the most remarkable men the writer had ever met. "He was a distinguished economist, an historian and a man of letters, but he belonged in all Colonial matters to the old school: the school of leading strings and giving advice." Lord Lytton described him when he was at the

Colonial Office as a man of great promptitude of judgment, and vigorous, if not combative, in defending his views. His intellectual characteristic was "massiveness." This description, however, must be applied to his physical appearance only, for he was square-built and thick-set—a complete contrast to Sir Charles Wood, who was a thin, spare man—the very ideal of activity, as if he were built on steel springs; for how could a man be intellectually "massive" who had a sense of humour so keen as to make him the author of the delightful article, "On the Malignity of Inanimate Things"?

The transfer of the Government of India to the Crown had recently been effected. The office was located at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and though the Secretary of State still had rooms in Cannon Row, they were seldom used. The Under-Secretary had no defined place in the Council, but Merivale was always consulted and his advice taken by all the members of Council, and by the Secretary of State. Among the members of Council were the famous Sir John Lawrence, afterwards Governor-General of India, Sir Robert Montgomery, the

successful Governor of the Punjab, whose kindliness of manner and good-natured face gave little indication of the man of iron nerve whose foresight and cool courage, when first the news of the capture of Delhi reached Lahore, had disarmed an overwhelming force of native troops, and prevented the revolt getting hold on the Punjab. It was at a ball at Lahore, as important in the annals of India as the famous ball before Waterloo in Brussels, amid the dancing and the music, that Sir Robert had conceived the idea of disarmament of the Sepoys and saving the Punjab. Sir Charles Mills acted as a liaison officer between the India Office and the City.

The changes among the Parliamentary Under-Secretaries were frequent. There were Lord De Grey and Lord Dufferin and Lord Northbrook, who subsequently became Governor-Generals of India; all of these naturally I knew as great friends.

I was lucky in my early entrance into London society to make the acquaintance of Charles Greville, who lived in the good old days of sinecures and enjoyed the sinecure office of Secretary of Jamaica, an island

which he never visited. In 1821 he also obtained the reversion of the Clerkship to the Privy Council, where during forty years he kept diaries which made him famous and gained him a reputation as the greatest diarist of his day.

Being closely connected with the "Times" added greatly to his position, which became remarkable. He lived in rooms over Lord Granville's house in Bruton Street, where Lady Granville used to call him her "lodger." Lord Granville told me that he considered the early volumes of his diaries superior to those written at a later period, and accounted for this because he thought the first volumes were written without any fixed intention of publication, whereas the later volumes were so intended. The diaries were very distasteful to Queen Victoria, who, remonstrating to Mr. Reeve, the Editor, was told by him that any attacks on Royal personages were made, not on Her Majesty, but only on her predecessors. Those who have read his memoirs (and who has not?) will have been struck by his constantly pathetic lamentations over his wasted opportunities, short-comings and



THE HON. ADOLPHUS LIDDELL



determination of amendment; but Lord de Mauley said that, notwithstanding, he would never miss a chance of a good bet on coming turf events.

I used to meet him at Lord Sydney's house at Frognall, and was terrified at his grumpiness, particularly on one or two occasions when I had to make a fourth hand at whist.

In those days the division between old and young was greater than it is now, and their relations were not so happy.

Lord Winchilsea unkindly described the diarist thus:

> "For fifty years he listened at the door,
> He heard some secrets and invented more,
> These he wrote down, and women, statesmen, kings,
> Became degraded into common things;
> They hide the smart and say, ''Tis only Greville,'
> But wish him and his journal at the devil."

Sir Francis Doyle's claim to be in the rôle of Civil Servants hangs on his appointment to a Receiver-Generalship, and then to a Commissionership of Customs in 1869, but his fame was established elsewhere than in Thames Street. When at the University he took a First Class in Classics, became a

Fellow of All Souls and went to the Bar, but attained little success in that profession, devoting his great talents to poetry. Among his writings on the going down of the "Birkenhead" he wrote a touching stanza:

> "There rose no murmuring from the ranks,
> By shameful strength unhonoured life to seek;
> Our post to quit we were not trained, nor taught
> To trample down the weak."

In 1867 he was chosen for the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford. He wrote an interesting autobiography which showed his many friendships—with Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Sidney Herbert and Mr. Gladstone. Of Mr. Gladstone's later politics he warmly disapproved, but this did not interfere in any way with their personal friendship, which lasted till his death in 1897. His father took him to the Derby on June 4, 1824, and he was ever after devoted to racing, his knowledge of horses being remarkable. I have heard it said that though very short-sighted he wrote the best accounts of race meetings ever given.

MR. GLADSTONE'S APPRECIATION OF THE SERVICE



CHAPTER IV

MR. GLADSTONE'S APPRECIATION OF THE SERVICE

THE following sketches of some of those with whom I was associated in the Civil Service are in the form of pen portraits. How I wish that I could be endowed, even for a few moments, with that priceless gift that George Du Maurier gives to the Duchess of Towers, and could "dream a true dream" that would bring to those who remain some touch of the happy days, long passed away, and of the times when once they

> "Held debate, a band
> Of youthful friends, on mind and art,
> And labour and the changing mart,
> And all the framework of the land."

But it cannot be, and I can only give these little sketches of the distinguished men who have done honour to the Civil Service of their country. I had the pleasant task at one time of making a collection of their photographs for presentation to Mr. Glad-

stone. He was ever an indulgent and generous master, and was perhaps inclined to exaggerate the merits of the instruments he so skilfully used. From a conversation I once had with him, it came into my head that he would value a series of photographs of those civil servants who had come into closest touch with him in his official career.

I set to work to collect them, and I do not know whether he or those who sent me their photographs were the more pleased, so many of them writing to express their pleasure of the honour of being included in the list. I wrote to Mr. Gladstone, saying: "Some time ago you said you would like a collection of photographs of those civil servants who have had the honour of being closely associated with you in your official duties. I have done my best to make this collection, which I now beg you to accept. In looking over the roll of distinguished men I feel that I owe you an apology for the irresistible vanity that has led me to include myself among the number."

Mr. Gladstone answered me, saying: "I hardly know how to thank you sufficiently for your most kind and most interesting gift.

It is a noble record of a Civil Service never, I suppose, excelled in any age or any country," etc., etc.—W. E. G.

Sir John Lambert wrote thanking me for sending him an extract of Mr. Gladstone's letter, saying:

"I feel that it is a great privilege to have my photograph associated with the days of those of which he speaks in such commendatory terms, and the knowledge that I have of their high qualifications and distinguished merits enables me to appreciate that privilege all the more. I shall place your letter with the many other records which I possess of Mr. Gladstone's singular generosity in estimating the services of those who have had the happiness of serving under him."

Sir Erskine May, afterwards Lord Farnborough, also wrote to me, saying:

"Mr. Gladstone is ever ready to acknowledge the obligations of statesmen to those who labour with them silently and unobtrusively in the government of the State. He could even tell you of reputations which have been won or sustained in great measure by the vigour and capacity of advisers of

whom the world has known nothing. Of such services he has himself shown a generous appreciation. His own gifts are so transcendent that he is able to discern and value the merits of fellow workers without jealousy or grudging. I shall, I hope, some day be allowed to see the 'noble record' he speaks of in terms so flattering. —T. Erskine May."

Mr. Gladstone was always a warm and even an enthusiastic admirer of the Inland Revenue and its officials. During the difficult steering of the Succession Duty Act he said, speaking of Mr. Trevor, the controller of legacy duties, that during the passage of the Bill through Committee he was repeatedly aghast at the damaging criticisms levelled at the measure, but visits to Mr. Trevor sitting under the gallery invariably succeeded in dispelling the fears which had been engendered in his mind.

Of Sir Charles Pressly, then Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, Mr. Gladstone once remarked that when he entered his room it was like a ray of sunshine breaking through the clouds of financial difficulties.

SIR HENRY MAINE AND LORD HAMMOND



CHAPTER V

SIR HENRY MAINE AND LORD HAMMOND

IN connection with Indian administration I must first speak of Sir Henry Maine, who was born in 1822. In 1840 he won an exhibition to Pembroke College at Cambridge, where he gained many distinctions in Classics and Poetry, and was Senior Classic, belonging to the famous "Apostles Club."[1] Tom Taylor and H. Hallam were among his contemporaries and friends. In 1847 he became Regius Professor of Civil Law and was called to the Bar in 1850, and contributed many articles to the "Saturday Review." Sir

[1] A club of long standing at Cambridge, composed of undergraduates and called the Cambridge University Club. It was more or less secret, and no list of members was given to the world, and outsiders were not supposed to know who were members; the number of them was twelve, hence its name. They were all philosophers, and each member in turn had to read a paper on some philosophical subject, which was criticised and discussed. Each speaker took his place on the hearthrug, whence he delivered his remarks.

Charles Wood, in 1861, offered him the post of legal member of Council in India, which his ill-health compelled him to refuse. The post was again offered to him in 1862, and this time the improvement in his health enabled him to accept it. This post he held for seven years under three Governor-Generals. In 1871 he was given the K.C.S.I. and appointed to a seat on the India Council. He had refused many honourable offers, among them the Chief Justiceship of Bengal, and Under-Secretaryships of the Home and Foreign Offices. His literary talent, which was very great, was fully exercised in the production of many valuable essays and books, but in February 1888 he died at Cannes.

Still to some extent and at one period of his career closely connected with India, there is Edmund Hammond, afterwards Lord Hammond. He was the son of George Hammond, a diplomatist of considerable note, who held the post of British Minister at Washington from 1791 to 1795 (a somewhat critical period), and served as Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1795 to 1806. He was a friend of Canning



LORD HAMMOND



and one of the editors of the " Anti-Jacobin." Edmund Hammond took a first-class degree at Oxford before entering the Foreign Office. He accompanied Sir Stratford Canning (afterwards Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe) to Constantinople, Madrid and Lisbon in 1831 and 1832, but subsequently settled down in the Foreign Office until 1873, working his way up through various departments until he became Permanent Under-Secretary of State. He was one of the best of public servants ; an indefatigable worker, taking too much, perhaps, on his own shoulders. He was the Foreign Office—he kept all the strings in his own hands. It was said of Gibbon that he did not know the difference between himself and the Roman Empire ; it might be said of Hammond that he did not know the difference between himself and the Foreign Office.

Seven years before his retirement his services were recognised by a Privy Councillorship—a distinction rarely conferred upon a subordinate officer. He probably knew more about foreign affairs than was known to any one man in all the chancelleries in Europe.

But his reputation for political prescience has been ruined by the fact that on July 5, 1870, when Lord Granville was taking over the seals of the Foreign Office after Lord Clarendon's death, he had been told by the Under-Secretary of State that with the exception of the trouble caused by the murder in Greece of Mr. Vyner and his friends by brigands, he (Mr. Hammond) had never during his long experience known so great a lull in foreign affairs, and that he was not aware of any pressing question which Lord Granville would have to deal with immediately. The very next day came the announcement of the candidature of a Prince of Hohenzollern for the crown of Spain, which led to the outbreak of war between France and Germany within less than a fortnight. But history has shown us that such errors of judgment are not infrequent. On this occasion the menace of the rivalry between France and North Germany was always in the background. Ambassadors at Paris, Berlin and other courts were alike deceived, though somewhat puzzled, by that treacherous calm. Bismark probably alone fully realised the

result of the coup which he was secretly preparing.

History is apt to repeat itself, and Hammond's unfortunate error in prophecy was no greater than that in one of Lord Dalhousie's despatches to Queen Victoria in 1856, which is worth recording:

"The Marquis of Dalhousie
to Queen Victoria.

"Government House, February 29, 1856.

"The guns are announcing from the ramparts of Fort William that Lord Canning has arrived. In an hour's time he will have assumed the Government of India. Lord Dalhousie will transfer it to him in a state of perfect tranquillity. There is peace within and without—and although no prudent man will ever venture to predict the certainty of continued peace in India, yet Lord Dalhousie is able to declare, without reservation, that he knows of no quarter in which it is probable that trouble will arise."

Up to 1860 the Foreign Office was established in a building composed of three rather dingy houses long swept away, the

best of which, looking on to St. James's Park, had been occupied by Mr. Canning. Here you might have met ambassadors seeking interviews and ministers on the way to the Cabinet, and here Mr. Hammond, who was the Foreign Office, sat. Lord Redesdale described him as a man of an imposing figure, big and burly, with rather a quick and jerky incisive manner which was apt to make men shy till they got to know him well. As a Russian secretary of embassy, whose English was more fluent than correct, once said: "She is very quick, Hammond, she." In early days he must have winked at the doings of the young spirits in what was called "the Nursery," who beguiled the time when they were kept waiting for expected work by various impromptu sports. Spencer Ponsonby, Dolly Oom, John Bidwell, Dick Wellesley, were the genial souls, but one of their amusements was brought to a close on a complaint being made to Lord Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, who desired to know who were the young gentlemen who used to dazzle the young ladies in the opposite street, and who, he said, were un-

gallant enough to cast reflections upon them with a looking-glass.

Though greatly interested in all the details of the new building into which the Foreign Office was moved, Mr. Hammond regretted the loss of the old room which he had loved and lived in for so many years and through so many changes of administration, which, with its large windows looking on to the Park, was not without its attractions. He always resented the Cabinet Councils being held elsewhere than in the Foreign Office, but Mr. Gladstone could not bear the size and magnificence of the new Foreign Office, and preferred the less stately but more historical room in No. 10 Downing Street.

It may be well to add to the credit of Lord Hammond that four men, whose early official days began under his guidance, have gained well-merited distinction in after life.

Philip Currie passed forty years in the Foreign Office and became Permanent Under-Secretary of State in 1889. He served in the British Legation at St. Petersburg, and when Lord Salisbury went as British Plenipotentiary to Constantinople, Currie was appointed Secretary to his special

mission. He also accompanied Lord Salisbury to the Congress of Berlin. He was chosen to accompany Lord Northampton's mission to invest King Alfonso of Spain, and in 1882 was appointed Under-Secretary of State, and subsequently Permanent Under-Secretary of State, succeeding Lord Pauncefote. He was chosen by Lord Rosebery in 1893 as Ambassador to Constantinople, where he remained for nearly five years.

The appointments for which he was selected by succeeding Secretaries of State speak to their appreciation of his services.

In 1903 he was made a peer, and died three years after that time.

And now at this moment in which I write I hear of the death of an old friend, Frank Bertie, for many years our Ambassador in Paris, where he won a remarkable popularity, so great that it was at the request of the French Government that the term of his office was prolonged.

C. Vivian entered the Foreign Office in 1851, and was attached to several special missions under Lord Clarendon at Paris in 1856. In 1869 he became a chief clerk, and in 1873 he was made Consul-General

at Alexandria, and at Bucharest in the following year. He became Resident Minister to the Swiss Confederation in 1879, and two years later Minister-Plenipotentiary to Brussels. He was Ambassador to Rome in 1892, dying there in 1893.

Algernon Mitford, afterwards Lord Redesdale, entered the Foreign Office in 1858, and was appointed Second Secretary to Japan in 1866. He filled the Office of Works from 1874 to 1886, and has written two interesting volumes of autobiography dealing largely with his experiences in Japan.

There were many stories told of Mr. Hammond. He laid great stress on maintaining the decorous appearance of the Foreign Office, in despite of the temptations to untidiness which were a natural result of the rather shabby labyrinthine character of the buildings in which it was housed. In the minute books kept by the different departments is recorded an ukase issued one sultry summer—"Clerks are not to walk about the passages in their shirt-sleeves"; and one of the earliest recollections of a surviving member of the staff of those

days is that of the Under-Secretary vigorously pursuing a fugitive "en déshabillé," and calling upon a distant office-keeper to identify him.

Alfred Montgomery disapproved as strongly as Hammond did of slovenly dress. On a broiling day the chairman's private secretary came into the Board-room in his shirt-sleeves. Montgomery, with his fascinating little stammer, called him back as he was leaving the room, saying: "Mr. ——, should it be any convenience to you to come in without your trousers, pray do not let any consideration for the Board prevent your doing so."

Hammond was much disgusted by the growing popularity of the moustache movement among his clerks, and it was said that he gave five shillings to the lamplighter to grow a moustache, thinking that this would abate the movement, but it had no effect.

His whole life, his powerful physique, his energies and abounding capacity for work were absorbed in that Foreign Office from which he was never absent. On one occasion, however, Mr. Spring Rice called and found him away. "Well, sir," said the

loyal doorkeeper, " he has gone to a funeral, and it's the only day's pleasuring he has had for four years." I recollect a great occasion when Mr. Gladstone desired to send an important message to Queen Victoria. It was late in the evening, and I could not find a cypher at the Foreign Office, and was told that Mr. Hammond never parted with the one he had himself made out of a dictionary which he never let out of his sight.

On his leaving the Foreign Office for the last time he took his watch to Dent's. The man told him it was worn out and not worth repairing. " Ah," he said, " that is my case," and went sorrowfully away.



MATTHEW ARNOLD



CHAPTER VI

MATTHEW ARNOLD

MATTHEW ARNOLD, born 1822, was a son of the celebrated head master of Rugby, at which school, of course, he was educated after being a week at Winchester. At Balliol he was a Newdigate Prizeman, and became a Fellow of Oriel. In 1849 he began publishing his poems and was chosen Professor of Poetry.

In 1851 Lord Lansdowne, then President of the Council, offered him an inspectorship of schools. He was then a friend of Clough, who was the subject of two of his finest poems, "The Scholar Gypsy" and "Thespis," and of John Duke Coleridge, the future Lord Justice, and became a poet, producing "The Strayed Reveller" in 1849; but it was not until 1852 that he was appreciated as a poet of high rank, and in 1857 he wrote the beautiful and touching poem on his father's death, "Rugby Chapel."

But his literary efforts did not prevent his devotion to his school work, which intensely interested him. If "Laudari a laudato viro" can give pleasure in the further world, Matthew Arnold will rejoice to hear what Augustine Birrell says of him :

"He conspired and continued to make things pleasant. Pedantry he abhorred. He was a man of this life and this world. A severe critic of the world indeed he was, but finding himself in it and not precisely knowing what is beyond it, he like a brave and true-hearted man set himself to make the best of it. Its sights and sounds were dear to him. The uncrumpling fern, the eternal moonlit snow, Sweet William with its homely cottage smell, the tinkling of the bells of the height-pasturing kine, the vagaries of men and women and dogs, their odd ways and tricks, whether of mind or manner, all delighted him."

Mr. Paul mentions that his most distinguishing characteristic was his uniform urbanity, which he often preached and always practised.

He was a welcome guest at every house which lay within his scholastic jurisdiction,

but chiefly did he delight in visits to Aston Clinton, where his hostess was Lady de Rothschild, who fully appreciated conversations on intellectual literature, in which she was fully capable of holding her own. In "Pendennis" Thackeray spoke of her in a beautiful and touching passage: "There I saw a Jewish lady only yesterday with a child at her knee and from whose face there shone a sweetness so angelical that it seemed to form a sort of glory round both and protection. I could have knelt before her too, and adored in her the divine beneficence in endowing us with the maternal 'Storge' which began with our race and sanctifies the history of mankind."

Is it strange that Arnold loved his visits to Aston Clinton, where he met at various times Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, Robert Browning, Wilberforce (Bishop of Oxford), Haldane, H. Asquith, Augustine Birrell, and others, less gifted perhaps, but who were yet under the fascination of their surroundings? On one occasion Arnold might have met Disraeli and the Bishop of Oxford together, and we can but admire the courage which enabled him to resist a temptation

which he said would interfere with his "absorbing devotion to his school work."

Alfred Montgomery said there was only one thing that he could not resist, and that was temptation. Montgomery himself, though perhaps not a distinguished official, had charm, beauty, wit, kindness and knowledge of the world, which were useful qualities to smooth the working of official life.

A contemporary of Matthew Arnold spoke of him as a "young, active and singularly graceful man, interested in all games and sports, a splendid swimmer and fisherman, wholly free from pomposity and stiffness; overflowing with humour and pleasantly unguarded in speech."

When Arnold was an inspector of schools under the Education Department he was sent on one occasion to France to make an official report upon the system of education. Lord Granville was then President of the Council.

Arnold had just written to the department complaining that the amount allowed him by the Treasury for his subsistence allowance whilst abroad was insufficient,



MATTHEW ARNOLD



and asking that it might be raised. But, as usual on these occasions, his request was refused.

Mr. Frederick Leveson-Gower happened to be in Paris at the same time, and was dining at one of the more expensive restaurants, where he saw Arnold at a table not far off enjoying a very sumptuous and expensive repast. He of course knew nothing about his request for an increased subsistence allowance, but as he knew Arnold, although only slightly at that time, he went up and spoke to him, and thought he seemed rather embarrassed. Arnold, as he wrote home afterwards, mistook Mr. Gower for his President, as at that time they were very much alike, and described his concern at seeing his chief, as he supposed, watch him consuming a very expensive dinner, and said: " What can he have thought of my request for a larger allowance if he supposed that this was the scale upon which I habitually lived in Paris? As a matter of fact, I have been living most frugally, and had determined to have one tip-top dinner the last night before I left, and it was this night on which Lord Granville

must needs meet me. I felt that I was embarrassed, and was in two minds as to whether I should tell him the whole story, or leave it alone."

Arnold was once having luncheon with the late Mr. Haweis, the well-known and rather eccentric London clergyman, who had recently had a little daughter born to him. Mr. Haweis had an album in which he was collecting autographs and sentiments from well-known people for the baby's future benefit, and asked his guest to write something in it. Arnold was rather at a loss, and said he did not know what to write, to which Haweis replied, "Oh! anything suitable and topical." Whereupon Arnold wrote the following verse:

> "Little baby Haweis
> Playing with your corals;
> Papa will teach you music,
> But who will teach you morals?"

Mr. Haweis was a great authority upon music, and had recently written a book called "Music and Morals."

There was a Treasury law which said that when an inspector's work at any place occupied more than one day, he must stay

there and not charge his fare there and back. Arnold did this on an occasion when he was engaged more than two days at Edmonton. The Treasury queried the amount. "Why did you not stop at Edmonton?" Arnold's answer was: "How could you expect me to stay at Edmonton when John Gilpin couldn't?"

He had a fine head of black hair, and Mrs. Humphry Ward told me that one day her husband found him standing outside a hairdresser's shop in Bond Street, and, being asked what he was doing, he said he was waiting for the artist who looked after "this perpetual miracle"—putting his hand to his head.

He died suddenly April 15, 1888—a happy death and after his own wish.

> "Spare me the whispering crowded room,
> The friends who come and gape and go,
> The ceremonious air of gloom,
> All which makes death a hideous show.
> Nor bring, to see me crave to live,
> Some doctor full of phrase and fame
> To shake his sapient head and give
> The ill he cannot cure a name."

"'I do love bullfinches,' said Matthew Arnold one day at Murthly, as we stopped

to admire two chaffinches that settled on the roadway in front of us. Now Matthew Arnold was an Oxford man and a scholar, but he did not know the commonest birds, plants or trees, and with all his learning he missed the best in life." [1]

[1] "Wanderings and Memories," J. G. Millais, p. 105.

SIR THOMAS FARRER AND SIR HENRY TAYLOR



CHAPTER VII

SIR THOMAS FARRER AND SIR HENRY TAYLOR

SIR THOMAS FARRER began his career as a pupil of Sir Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne. He was called to the Bar and was employed by the Board of Trade in the preparation of the Merchant Shipping Bill, which passed in 1849. His services in the preparation of that measure and its passage through Parliament were very great and led to his appointment to the Board of Trade as Permanent Secretary. He was a man of great activity, shrewd and quick in manner, keen about reform and anxious to serve the public. In the matter of gas legislation he found the companies in possession of virtual monopolies in each of their respective districts in London, the only protection possessed by the public being the maximum price that they might charge. This was coupled with a maximum dividend beyond which they might not go. As the companies earned easily enough to pay their

maximum dividend they had no incentive to do anything for the good of the public, either by reducing prices or improving the supply. Farrer was largely instrumental in introducing the reform by which, in return for reduction of prices to the public, the gas companies were allowed to pay higher dividends. It might be said that he carried his anxiety to protect the public too far, for, imitating the zeal of the Board, Parliament imposed such restrictions and conditions on the promoters of new undertakings requiring parliamentary powers, that enterprise was considerably curtailed.

When Bright became President of the Board of Trade, Farrer thought that a brilliant era of reform was opening. He was rather damped when after listening to his exposition Bright remarked: "Well, Mr. Farrer, don't you think we could hang on a little as we are?"

All the reforms in commercial law were due to his influence. When Mr. Chamberlain became its President, Farrer was surprised to find how ignorant he, Chamberlain, was of all economic questions. At the same time he was struck by his adroitness in



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assimilating and reproducing arguments which he did not understand. "Dogmatic in his views and of a controversial temperament," said the writer in the "Dictionary of National Biography," "especially distrustful of the extension of State interference, and a Free Trader of unyielding temper, he yet maintained cordial relations with successive ministers." He maintained his strong views after his retirement, and effectively combated the heresies of bounties and bimetallism, and became President of the Cobden Club. In Paul's "History of England" it is said that among the benefactors of the working classes a high place should be given to Sir Thomas Farrer.

Mr. George Leveson-Gower gives me a good instance of the keenness Farrer felt on subjects in which he was interested.

He lived at Abinger Hall, a few miles from Holmbury, Surrey.

"One day my father asked him to come over to lunch to meet Lord Courtney, who was staying with us, but he beat about the bush and finally declined. On my father continuing to press him to come, and asking why he could not do so, he at last confessed

that it would not be pleasant to him at that moment to meet Lord Courtney because he was a bimetallist."

Farrer was inclined to recruit his office from outside, which did not make for his popularity therein, but he introduced Robert Herbert for the head of the railway, and Hamilton, who subsequently was Secretary for Ireland, as Chief of the Statistical Department, and both these appointments were admirable and justified his selection.

He set an example, happily not required in the Civil Service, of pecuniary scrupulosity. He found soon after being appointed to the Board of Trade that the interests of that department touched so many sides of life that it was almost impossible not to be charged with favouritism to "the interests." Consequently he sold all British investments of every character, and did not hold any during his period of office.

On his retirement he did loyal service as an alderman of the London County Council, and I had the honour of being his successor.

Among those whom I personally knew, I wish that I could include Sir Henry Taylor, the author of "Philip Van Artevelde," a

play much thought of at the time. In early life he had been appointed to a clerkship in the Colonial Office: later on he refused an offer to become an Under-Secretary—stating "that the choice of a Permanent Under-Secretary of State was in his opinion by far the most important function that can devolve upon a Secretary of State to exercise." Rejoicing over the appointment of Sir Frederick Rogers as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, he described him as having practical abilities of the highest order, a just and penetrating judgment, and a habit of searching out every question that was before him in its whole breadth and length and yet dealing with it.

Sir Henry for many years was absorbed in the slavery question, and exercised a large influence on all Colonial questions with successive Secretaries of State. As Charles Greville said, he ruled half the West Indies in the Colonial Office with an invisible sceptre. He pleaded ill-health as preventing him from attendance at his office, and was allowed to have all despatches and papers sent to him in the country. Mr. Gladstone used to call him "the glory and the shame

of the Civil Service." It was a curious fact that, although when in office the asthma prevented his living in London, on his retirement he chose that place for his home, until he migrated to Bournemouth, where he died. Great as was his influence in Colonial affairs, his reputation was as great in the world of letters; but he has written two volumes of autobiography, which perhaps is enough. He was a vain man, and was so pleased by the scarlet robes of his D.C.L., which had been bestowed on him by the University of Oxford, that he used to wear them at his own dinner-table, whereby hangs a tale. Years after his death a resident at Bournemouth, going to her room, saw in the passage a man in a scarlet robe disappear through a door. Of course she had no explanation of this coincidence, but afterwards heard that Sir Henry had lived and died in the house she was occupying.

SIR RALPH LINGEN, SIR T. E. MAY, SIR SPENCER WALPOLE, SIR LOUIS MALLET



CHAPTER VIII

SIR RALPH LINGEN, SIR T. E. MAY, SIR SPENCER WALPOLE, SIR LOUIS MALLET

SIR RALPH LINGEN was a friend of the Master of Balliol, and gained the Ireland Scholarship in 1838. Soon after leaving the University he entered the Education Office, and was the author, under Lowe, of the revised code which brought down on them both the most violent attacks. He became Secretary to the Treasury in 1869, where he showed a rare combination of scholarship and business capacity. In an office where it was his principal duty to say " No " to most of the ill-considered demands upon the public purse, he was ever ready to give his sanction to those who put before him wise and reasonable proposals for schemes which appealed to his views of true economy, and his remarkable modesty helped him through all his difficulties. Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer

eulogised him as one of the greatest living benefactors of the country, as a ferocious economist, parsimonious with public money, looking upon the chief of each spending department as an enemy against whom he defended the public treasury. Speaking from many years of official intercourse, I can safely say that I never had one moment of unnecessary interference or unreasonable exercise of authority.

Sir Ralph was very fond of riding, and might be seen every morning after his preliminary canter in Rotten Row arriving punctually at the garden gate of the Treasury, followed by a groom with a heavy portfolio containing the results of his overnight work.

On his retirement he became a peer, but so far as I know he took no part in debate in the House of Lords.

Sir Ralph Lingen was old-fashioned and precise. When the Order of the Bath is conferred by the Sovereign the recipient has the medal placed over his shoulder suspended by a long riband which reaches down below the waistcoat, but it is the custom for ordinary use to cut the riband





SIR THOMAS ERSKINE MAY

so as to bring the order close to the neck; Sir Ralph, however, always wore his decoration at the full length, as he considered that it should be worn as having been so placed by the Sovereign.

It was told of him that one night he heard a noise in the pantry of his house, and going down he encountered a burglar and asked him most civilly what he was doing there. The man said that he had never done a job like that before, whereupon Sir Ralph said, " Will you come upstairs with me into the hall ? " where he begged the intruder to take a seat while he went to summon a policeman. The man was so overcome by Sir Ralph's civility that he waited till the arrival of the constable, who took him into custody.

In 1886 Sir Thomas Erskine May, who had for many years been Clerk of the House of Commons, became Lord Farnborough. He was the embodiment of parliamentary procedure, having begun his career as Assistant Librarian in the House of Commons and written books which have been ever since recognised and accepted as authoritative, not only in England, but in

foreign countries. Amongst them his "Constitutional History of England since George III" will always remain the text-book on all matters connected with the laws of Parliament. Sir Thomas Erskine May remembered the Speaker leaving the chair, followed by the great majority of members, and proceeding in haste to the riverside to watch the race for Doggett's Coat and Badge. History repeats itself, for in 1919 the House adjourned for an hour to witness the poor show called the River Pageant.

No man was ever fitted more adequately than Sir Thomas for the post he held, for, with all his knowledge, he was ever ready to help those who came to him for advice. Sir William Fraser gives an instance of Sir Erskine May's readiness in surmounting a difficulty. In Speaker Denison's time a difficult question on order arose, and leaning over to Sir Erskine, he asked what on earth he was to say. Sir Erskine whispered: "I recommend you, Sir, to be very cautious," and slipped away behind the chair.

On the walls of St. Margaret's, Westminster, is a memorial erected by friends who record his eminent services to the

State. "He was," it relates, "fifty-four years in the service of the House of Commons, during fifteen years of which he held the office of 'Clerk of the House.' He was the author of historical works of standard merit, and above all of 'The Treatise on the Law and Usage of Parliament,' and by this work alone he conferred lasting benefit on the Parliament of the United Kingdom as well as on every State where Parliamentary Government prevails. His friends have raised this Memorial in token of affection and of their admiration of a life devoted to the Public Service."

Spencer Walpole at the age of nineteen became a clerk in the War Office, having won the first place in the preliminary examination in 1857. He was his father's secretary and then private secretary at the Home Office to Sotheran Estcourt in 1859. In those positions he gained a good experience in official work and fitted himself for the position his father gave him in 1867 as a fishery inspector, while in his leisure time he worked for Frederick Greenwood on the "Pall Mall Gazette," and wrote the life of his grandfather, Spencer Perceval. In 1878

he produced the beginning of his "History of England from 1815." In 1882 he was appointed by Mr. Gladstone to the Governorship of the Isle of Man, where he performed good service for twelve years. Having a considerable time for literary work, he wrote an official life of Lord John Russell. In 1890 he produced that part of his History which reached down to 1856, when he was appointed Secretary to the Post Office. His aptitude for organisation enabled him during five years to effect many reforms in his department.

In 1897 he was the British delegate to the Postal Congress at Washington. There, as in London, he gained well-deserved popularity. He was chosen president of the Literary Society, an office which his father held for thirty years. In 1899 he resigned his secretaryship at the Post Office.

A good and hard-working official, he had earned a distinct reputation, but his History places him in a high order of literary merit. Sir Alfred Lyall, whose testimony was very valuable, pronounced him as having a style clear, level and straightforward, and of great merit, and considered that he has



SIR SPENCER WALPOLE



filled large vacant spaces in the history of our country.

He was eagerly sought after as a director by important city companies, and died only too soon, leaving no son behind him.

I cannot but think that Spencer Walpole was not sufficiently appreciated for the great work he undertook and completed in his "History of England," which extended from the conclusion of the great European War of 1815 to 1856; a history which has been spoken of as "possessing a knowledge derived from experience of the world. The spirit of detachment, a just sense of proportion, an aptitude for the handling of statistics, with a perception of the right deductions which should be drawn from them, and scrupulous accuracy, are high qualifications for the history of recent events; all of which he possessed." This should have led to greater fame than has yet been accorded him.

Sir Louis Mallet (1823-1890), who held a place of his own among the civil servants of the last century, passed through the usual stages of a young clerk in the Board of Trade, including private secretaryships to

two Presidents, before he found his opportunity as an Assistant Commissioner and Cobden's right-hand man in carrying into effect the Commercial Treaty with France in 1860. He was thus launched on a period of diplomatic work in connection with the Treaty policy which lasted for some ten years, until its abandonment by Mr. Lowe in the first Gladstone Ministry, owing to what he held to be a narrow and pedantic preference for a policy of commercial isolation. But his association with Cobden, for whom he had an enthusiastic admiration, had a decisive effect on Mallet's own outlook and career; he had become, in Lord Morley's words, "one of the most eminent advocates of Cobden's principles to be found among English statesmen." His later official life was sharply distinguished by his severance, for the above-mentioned reason, from the Board of Trade, where Sir Thomas (afterwards Lord) Farrer, a very able official of a different type, succeeded him. The Duke of Argyll, wishing to secure more adequate representation at the India Office of British commercial policy and finance, nominated him in 1872 to a seat on the India Council,

and two years later appointed him to succeed his cousin, Herman Merivale, as Permanent Under-Secretary of State, a post which he held for nearly ten years during the strongly contrasted viceroyalties of Lords Northbrook, Lytton, and Ripon. His son, in a short biography published in 1905, gives an account of the part he played in the Indian controversies of the day, particularly in connection with economic and financial problems, including bimetallism, his advocacy of which brought him into conflict with some more orthodox friends. But the bigger questions underlying our presence in India, which succeeding years have brought ever more urgently to the front, continually exercised his thoughts, and his correspondence is often occupied with speculations as to the ultimate fate of our rule, and whether it would long be possible to reconcile the claims of the two seemingly incompatible ideals—those of democracy and empire—which the destiny of Great Britain had forced upon her.

But it was Mallet's personality rather than his experience in government, varied as that was, which gave him the authority

which he undoubtedly exercised among leading men of his generation. Lord Cromer, for instance, spoke of his death as "to me an irreparable calamity. . . . Besides the intimate knowledge he possessed of economic science, of which he had made a special study, his high-minded attachment to principle, and his keen insight into the forces in motion in the political world, rendered his advice of the utmost value." Much of this influence was due to his natural gift of expression both in writing and in conversation. Sir Arthur Godley (now Lord Kilbracken), who succeeded him at the India Office, observed on one occasion: "He had an extraordinary gift of lucid exposition both on paper and (what is still more uncommon) vivâ voce"; and he had a charm of manner which the late Mr. R. H. Hutton, the famous editor of the "Spectator," described when he said, in words which are equally flattering to the Civil Service and to the subject of his remarks: "Even in England, bureaucrats seldom have the ease and polish of Sir Louis Mallet, and . . . even among English departmental chiefs Sir Louis Mallet was remarkable for the

courtesy without blandness, the confidence without presumption, the knowledge of the world without worldliness, the ease without easiness, which made all intercourse with him a pleasure and a refreshment."

Some of these characteristics were no doubt traceable to his foreign extraction, for he was the grandson of Mallet du Pan, the well-known champion of constitutional monarchy in France during the Revolution, who died as an " émigré " in this country at the end of the eighteenth century, and whom he resembled in some physical and intellectual attributes—in the prescience, for instance, which often caused him to be dubbed a pessimist. He was fortunate in his friendships and was a welcome member of a social circle united by many common ties and sympathies which I can best describe as that which used to gather in the hospitable, though rather intellectually exclusive, houses of Lord Arthur Russell and Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff. Most of them have now passed away, and if Mallet's name is remembered at all it will perhaps be for his reasoned opposition to the forces of Socialism and Imperialism, which he looked

upon as interdependent, and to which he hoped against hope that an honest and thorough application of the principles of free exchange (as he expounded them in a few scattered writings not so well known as they might be) would prove an antidote.

" TOM " TAYLOR, SIR ARTHUR HELPS, R. HERBERT, SIR C. TREVELYAN



CHAPTER IX

"TOM" TAYLOR, SIR ARTHUR HELPS, R. HERBERT, SIR C. TREVELYAN

TOM TAYLOR may be claimed as a civil servant, doing good work as Assistant Secretary in the administration of the Public Health Act in 1850, when there was an outbreak of cholera; but his fame was gained as a dramatist and as editor of "Punch," and a prolific playwright. He told us one night at the Cosmopolitan how, coming from Clapham, where he lived, he had entered into conversation with the bus driver.

"It seems to me, sir," he said—"it seems to me, sir, as Society's well-nigh at an end in Paris."

"How so?" said Taylor.

"Why," he continued, "I was reading last night that they were making barricades of omnibuses, and I thinks to myself, when they does that, Society's well-nigh at a hend."

Tom Taylor was a great friend of Thackeray. They shared chambers when "Pendennis" was written. The chambers were well described :

> "They were fusty, they were musty,
> They were grimy, dull and dim,
> The paint scaled off the panelling,
> The stairs were all untrim."

Sir Arthur Helps, a highly cultivated Clerk of the Council, succeeded Mr. William Bathurst in that office. He was the author of "Friends in Council" and many other books, including "Essays written in the Intervals of Business," which is in my opinion delightful reading.

No one could with better judgment write a description of the relation between the political and permanent officials of the State :

"A kindred subject to administration is that of the relative position and conduct of the principal legislative and administrative functionaries. It is an interesting point connected with government to consider how permanent officers and transitory political officers of a higher grade should act together. It might naturally be expected



Photo] [*London Stereoscopic Co.*

"TOM" TAYLOR



that this joint action would be somewhat difficult. The permanent officer, a Permanent Under-Secretary for instance, is generally chosen with great care. He is often a person who is distinguished for general knowledge and ability, and then he is likely to have an amount of special knowledge which it would take many years of official drudgery for the political chief to attain. In fact, to use a common phrase, he is the master of the situation, and he may be inclined to make an ungenerous use of his advantages. On the other hand, a political chief, conscious that all power rests with him, that he has to undertake the defence of the department in Parliament, and that he may be misled or overpowered by the special knowledge of the permanent official, would naturally, if he were a small-minded man, be a little tempted to be captious and overbearing. Moreover, he is tempted to think that unless he makes many comments and objections to the proposal of the permanent officer, he may be supposed not to understand the business at all. In short, there are temptations on both sides to injudicious conduct. But whether, to use

a word which is a great favourite with French people, there is so little that is 'sinister' in the nature of the public men of this country, or whether it is that men holding office become almost immediately attached to their department and identified with its interests, the practical result is that these high permanent officers and these still higher political personages as a rule get on very well together. I have uniformly found that these two classes of official men speak well of one another; and, in short, generally end by becoming sincere friends. There is not indeed a better basis for lasting friendship than that which is elicited by public men working together for the same purpose —namely, the public good."

Sir Arthur soon won the confidence of Queen Victoria, and helped Her Majesty in many literary ventures.

Robert Herbert was a brilliant classical scholar who for a time was Governor of Queensland. His ability, disinterestedness and zeal were very remarkable. After relinquishing his governorship, his health not being what it was, he went back to the Colonial service to take charge of a depart-

ment which was in need of a head. The strain put upon him at that time hastened his end. Like many other able men, he had the not uncommon fault of trying to do too much himself, which caused overwork and consequent loss of power. He was a genial and kind-hearted man, and at the same time something of a cynic. He did not like fools, but had a sneaking affection for a rascal, if the rascal was humorous and amused him. He would take infinite pains and give himself any amount of trouble to make good the mistakes of such a one, saying: "Poor little P——, he is no worse than the others, they are all a lot of duffers." There was a man who was always getting into trouble and always bringing anxiety and extra work to Herbert, but he never refused to support him.

He genuinely loved the Colonies and devoted himself entirely to their well-being. Sir George Grey in referring to his services says he was a man who controlled the destinies of the Colonial Office, and Sir Charles Dilke described him as the perfect permanent official.

Charles Trevelyan, though still a boy,

had attained considerable proficiency in oriental languages, and having obtained a nomination from the Directors of the East India Company to the Bengal Civil Service, he was chosen soon after his arrival in Calcutta as assistant to Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Northern Provinces, who was an able and sagacious administrator of unimpeachable integrity and untiring industry—a splendid chief for a young man to have as a master. It was not long before Trevelyan had gained his opportunity and become, after rapid promotion, the Secretary to the Sudder Board of Revenue, which he held until 1838. Writing of himself, he spoke of the intellectual prowess and capacity for prolonged exertion felt by him when, having gone to bed an hour or so before midnight, he woke up as long after. "Never," said he, "did my brain seem clearer or stronger and the work of minute writing easier or better done than when indisposed to sleep. I went through my papers often in the quiet which precedes the dawn."

This habit made possible the amount of work he performed. When at home on

furlough he was made Permanent Secretary of the Treasury in London, and thereby placed at the head of the English Civil Service. He was then thirty years old; but he had been engaged during twelve years in responsible and important public work in India, at Delhi, in Rajpootana and at Calcutta. Entering upon his new duties with the energy of a man in the spring time of life, combined with the experience of a practical administrator, he dealt successfully with relief works in Ireland during the failure of the potato crop and consequent famine of 1845-47.

Lord Macaulay, at the head of a Royal Commission, had recommended that all appointments to the Indian Civil Service ought to be made on the basis of an open competitive examination of a scholastic character. This recommendation was speedily acted on, and in 1853 Mr. Gladstone, having great confidence in Trevelyan's judgment, chose him and Sir Stafford Northcote to inquire into the organisation of the Civil Service at home, and more particularly into the mode of entry into it.

The report was strongly in favour of throwing the Service open to free and fair competition among all the citizens of the country, instead of leaving it a close preserve for private favouritism and electoral influence ; and it was mainly due to him that the purchase of military commissions was extinguished, and promotion in the army made the reward of merit and no longer an affair of money. But so great was the opposition to this scheme that Lord Palmerston, fearing difficulties in the House of Commons, in 1855 created a body of three Civil Service Commissioners to examine all candidates for various appointments, not necessarily by competition ; but on June 7, 1870, all the offices in the State were, in spite of much opposition, thrown open to public competition with the exception of the Foreign Office, Lord Clarendon, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, going so far in opposition to the proposal as to say that if it was to be applied to his office he would rather resign.

Mr. Gladstone had always been in favour of the scheme, but it had been strenuously opposed by many distinguished men who,

like Sir Thomas Farrer at the Board of Trade, disapproved of it and of Mr. Lowe's division of upper and lower clerks, because it introduced the military system into a Service where the whole matter should be "la carrière ouverte aux talents." He thought the difficulty of selecting for administrative posts almost insoluble, and quoted the answer given by Lord Grey to a member of Parliament who alluded to the many places he had given his sons, in justifying what he had done by saying that he knew them better than anybody else, and was sure they would do credit to any office to which they were appointed. Had the objectors lived to the present day they would, I am sure, have acknowledged how wrong they had been, and how successfully the present scheme has brought competitors of high qualifications into the ranks of the Civil Service.

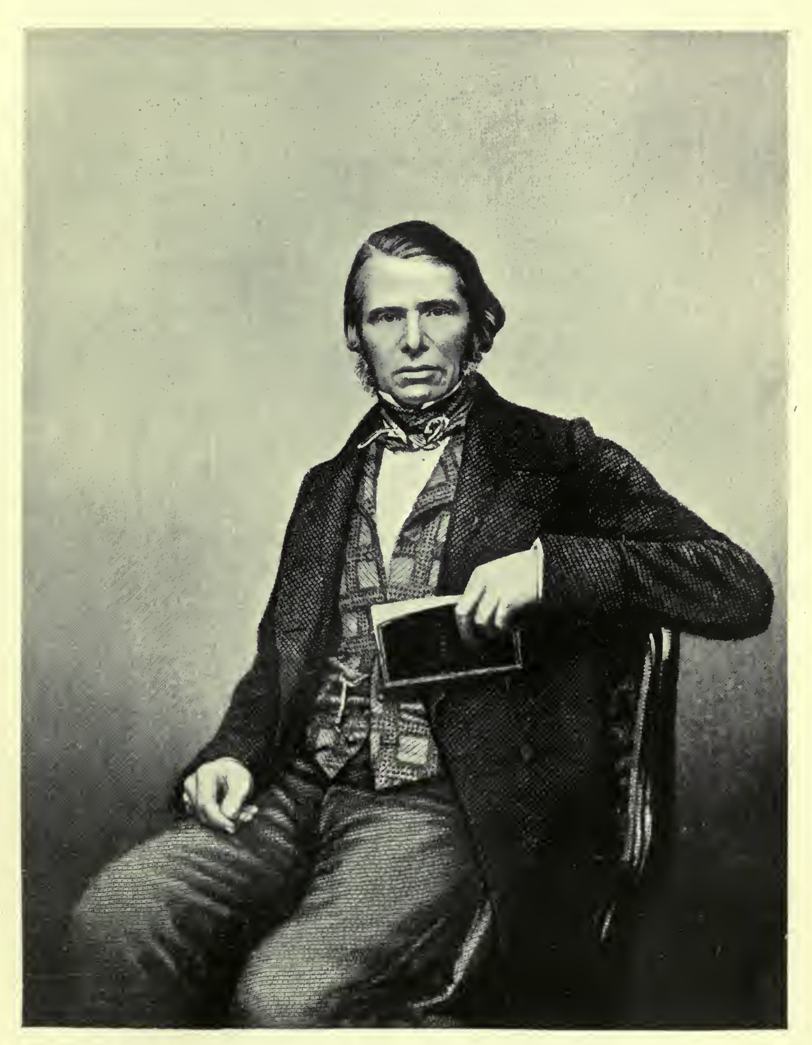
Sir Charles Trevelyan, as has been seen, was a strong advocate of open competition for all clerkships in the Civil Service ; and he might have used the words of Sir Gregory Hardlines in the "Three Clerks" : "What if the Civil Service through his instrumen-

tality should become the nucleus of the best intellectual dignity in the country instead of being a byword for sloth and ignorance ? "

It is interesting to read of Lord Macaulay's anxiety for the success of Sir Charles Trevelyan's advocacy of open competition for entry into the Civil Service, and his difficulties. Accustomed, he writes, according to the frequent fate of permanent officials, "to be pushed to the front in the moment of jeopardy and thrust into the rear in the moment of triumph, Sir Charles had weathered more formidable storms than that which was now growling and blustering through all the clubs and board-rooms between Piccadilly and Parliament Street." And he triumphed in the end.

Mr. Gladstone was amused at a story he told me of a difference that Sir Charles Trevelyan had with Mr. Wilson, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. The question at dispute was to be decided by Mr. Gladstone, to whom, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, the matter was referred.

On the day of the appointed meeting, Mr.



SIR CHARLES TREVELYAN



Wilson came and said there was no necessity for any intervention on Mr. Gladstone's part, as he had spoken severely to Sir Charles Trevelyan, who was quite determined never to give offence again. On Mr. Wilson's departure, Sir Charles Trevelyan arrived and told Mr. Gladstone the same story, saying he had spoken strongly to Mr. Wilson who, with tears in his eyes, promised to offend no more.

I was private secretary to Sir Charles Wood when Sir Charles Trevelyan was appointed Governor of Madras, and he asked me to lay my hands on every Blue Book I could collect for him to read on his passage to India, saying that he could not have too many. He was not amenable to discipline, and was recalled from his governorship for publicly publishing his disapproval of a scheme of taxation proposed by the Financial Member of the Council of India, Lord Palmerston; and Sir Charles Wood, while justifying his recall, spoke in glowing terms of his character and services. In 1862 his indiscretion was forgiven, and he was sent as Financial Adviser to the Government of India,

where he inaugurated great administrative reforms.

He was a staunch Liberal, and on his return to England occupied himself until his death in literary pursuits.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

SIR E. RYAN, SIR T. FREMANTLE, LORD BLACHFORD, SIR E. BRADFORD, SIR G. DASENT, W. R. GREG

CHAPTER X

SIR E. RYAN, SIR T. FREMANTLE, LORD BLACHFORD, SIR E. BRADFORD, SIR G. DASENT, W. R. GREG

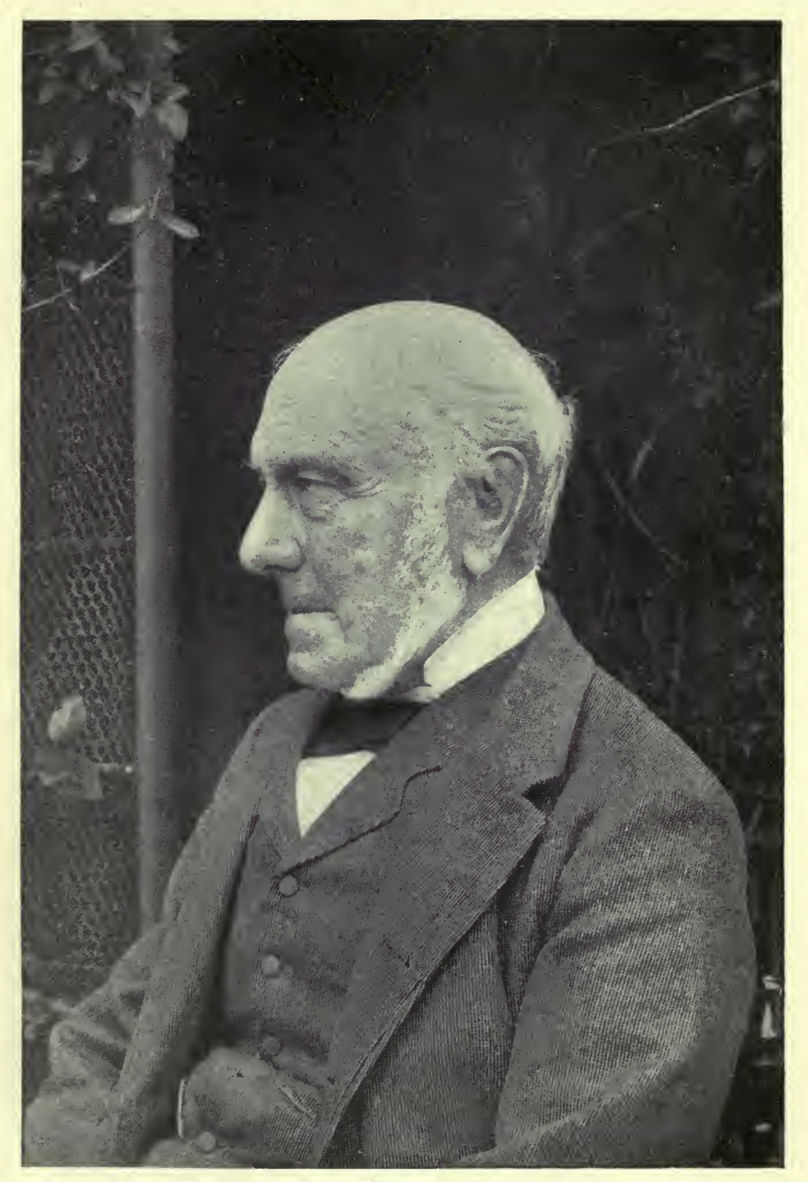
THE long battle of open competition was by this time over, and the office of Chief Commissioner was filled by the appointment of Sir Edward Ryan, who had been Chief Justice of Bengal and a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The office he now held was new and required great knowledge, tact and judgment, which were not wanting. Sir Edward was Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, and a member of the Dilettanti Society, where his picture would not give the onlooker an idea of a wise and sober judge.

Sir Thomas Fremantle, afterwards Lord Cottesloe, was Chairman of the Board of Customs when Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer, who used to say that they never looked at a subject through the same eye, though the Chancellor was ready to

admit that the subordinate always loyally carried out his master's measures. To him, however, I owe a deep debt of gratitude, for he was the father of my dear friend Charles Fremantle, secretary to Mr. Disraeli and subsequently Deputy Master of the Mint and Government Director of the Suez Canal. He was beloved by all his friends, and a story told before by me, showing his modesty, was this: Coming out of the Cosmopolitan one night, where a young member of the Government was holding forth and laying down the law, he said, "What a bore that fellow is! He is always cocksure about everything, whereas you and I go crawling through the world thanking God we are not found out."

As Thackeray says: "Ah, what a lucky thing it is for you and me, my man, that we are not found out in our peccadilloes."

Frederic Rogers, afterwards Lord Blachford, was born in 1811, being the eldest son of Sir Frederic Leman Rogers, Bart. He greatly distinguished himself as a scholar both at Eton and Oxford, where among his friends and contemporaries were Mr. Gladstone (a lifelong friend), Hope Scott, Hur-



LORD BLACHFORD



rell Froude, and Church, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's. Arthur Hallam and Selwyn, afterwards Bishop of New Zealand and Lichfield, were with him at Eton, but went to Cambridge. In 1833, having taken his degree with a double first class, he was elected a Fellow of Oriel—at that time the highest honour that an Oxford man could attain—his performance in the examination being pronounced by Keble, one of the examiners, to be among the very best that he had ever seen. Rogers was thus brought into the very centre of the so-called Tractarian movement; he was the intimate friend of Newman, Froude, Keble, Church, and the other leaders of that memorable time, and the influences to which he was then subjected remained with him till the end of his life.

In 1837 he was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, but he did not sever his connection with Oxford, and, although he became a good lawyer, he never practised. His high reputation caused him to receive offers of official work of a kind for which legal knowledge was required, and he was thus gradually attracted into the permanent Civil Service. After being employed on various

special missions in the West Indies and elsewhere, he was finally appointed in 1860 to succeed Herman Merivale as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the great delight of Sir Henry Taylor, then the most distinguished member of the Colonial Office staff.

This post he held for eleven years, during which time his influence was very great, and his advice and assistance were most highly appreciated by successive Secretaries of State. There is an amusing story which illustrates the opinion that was held in the Colonies as to his official ascendency. The Chief Justice of Victoria once remarked, when speaking in the Assembly : " It might be said with perfect truth that the million and a half of Englishmen who inhabit these colonies, and during the last fifteen years have believed that they possessed self-government, have really been governed for the whole of that time by a person of the name of 'Rogers.' "

His performance of the duties of this important office was recognised by the bestowal of the K.C.M.G. in 1869 and the G.C.M.G. in 1883 ; in 1871, on his retire-

ment, he was raised to the peerage and was subsequently sworn as a Privy Councillor. It is safe to say that he was generally regarded as one of the ablest, if not the ablest, of the civil servants of his time, and the high honours that he received were universally approved as being no more than his due. In 1851 he had succeeded his father in the baronetcy, and had inherited a beautiful property in Devonshire—Blachford—from which, on being made a peer, he took his title.

His interest in ecclesiastical and theological matters never left him. Among the manifold duties of his post at the Colonial Office, none were more congenial or more sure of his attention than those which related to the government of the Church in the Colonies, and this was one of the few subjects on which, after his retirement from office, he spoke in the House of Lords. In 1846, before he was a member of the permanent Civil Service, he had been one of a small band of High Churchmen (among them Montague Bernard and R. W. Church, afterwards Dean) who started the "Guardian" newspaper. The enterprise was under-

taken in a spirit of propagandism, from the highest motives, and with little or no hope of avoiding pecuniary loss ; but in this case virtue was its own reward, for the paper soon had a large circulation, and for many years brought in a considerable income to its founders.

In private life he was one of the most interesting and attractive of men, full of knowledge on very many subjects, and distinguished by a most genuine and almost excessive humility, which in a man of such unusual abilities was a very noticeable characteristic. It was, however, combined with a very clear and decisive judgment, and a firm adherence to the opinions which it led him to form.

He was married, but had no children. After eighteen years of retirement, spent almost entirely at his home in Devonshire, he died in 1889.

A few years after his death a selection from his private correspondence was published, and was widely recognised as a volume of great interest and high literary merit. In a note appended to one of the letters it is recorded that Cardinal Newman,

a few days before his death, dictated a message in which he said that "of all his friends Lord Blachford was the most gifted, the most talented, and of the most wonderful grasp of mind"—a remarkable testimony from one who so widely differed from him on the subject which was the chief interest and motive power of his life.

Sir Edward Bradford's career of military success and the story of his splendid courage in India are too well known to be mentioned here, but as a Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police he maintained a reputation, which has been less fully recognised, for that powerful administration, that courage and that faculty for the management of men which he had won so successfully in his long service in India. It would be impossible for the present generation to understand the peculiar charm of manner which endeared him to all manner of people. I only wish I could describe his qualities as a civil servant.

In 1890 they were brought to a severe test and not found wanting. A grave disaffection had sprung up in the police force and a general strike was threatened,

aggravated by differences between the Commissioner, Mr. Munro, and Mr. Matthews, who was then Home Secretary. Thirty-nine men refused to go on duty, and a strike threatened.

Sir Edward acted with manly vigour, at once dismissed them all and sternly enforced discipline, and then devoted himself to remedial measures. Not one of the police stations but was personally visited by him, where he listened to all complaints and paid attention to the physical and moral welfare of the force. Many a morning, when the London world was taking its morning walk, Sir Edward might be seen on a young four-year-old coming back from a visitation of distant quarters, for which he had started while others slept.

Apart from his crushing the threatened strike, he was responsible for order during the disgraceful rowdyism of the Mafeking days, the disorderly meetings of the so-called unemployed, the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria and the Coronation of Edward VII; and I well recollect how the crowd cheered the police as they moved off from their arduous duties on those occasions. All this



Photo] [*Elliott & Fry*

SIR EDWARD BRADFORD



was accomplished by Sir Edward Bradford, who was beloved not only by the force itself, but by every man, woman and child who had the happiness of his acquaintance, and, still more, of knowing his kindness. It is well in these days to record even feebly the character and career of such a man.

Sir George Dasent was at one time assistant editor of the "Times" under his brother-in-law Delane. His connection was mainly with the foreign policy of that paper, but his chief pursuit was study of the Icelandic Sagas. He became the great authority on Scandinavian literature, and translated several of the great sagas. Even more than Eric Magnusson and William Morris, he was the means of introducing the Saga literature to English readers. Lowe, who had a great opinion of his success in Icelandic history, persuaded Mr. Gladstone to appoint him to a Civil Service Commissionership, the duties of which he performed energetically. He was a great and amusing talker and a fine judge of gold and silver plate.

On the occasion of Lord Rosebery's marriage with Miss Hannah Rothschild, he

was complaining of the absurdity of a poor man giving presents to rich brides. "What I should like," he said, "would be to find something very rare and of no value." Lord Granville who was present said: "Have you thought of a lock of your hair, Dasent?"

Now Sir George was perfectly bald.

A great bore on the subject of the Baconian theory, travelling down to Ascot, wearied Sir George with his reiterations, ending: "And now, Sir George, what do you think about it?" "I think," said Sir George, without a moment's hesitation, "that your bacon is all gammon."

He was much interested in numismatics, and "on one occasion, when I was a boy, he asked," says George Leveson, "to see a small collection of old coins which I had, in order to be able to judge whether any of them were of any value. They were sent to him in a bag, but unluckily got lost owing to his changing his house at that time. He was much distressed about this, and in return insisted on giving me a small gold lion which had been one of a pair which had been fixed, one at each side, at the back

of the throne of King Coffee, the king of Ashanti, whom Sir Garnet Wolseley (as he then was) had recently defeated. Sir Garnet had given the other lion to the Duke of Connaught. They were made of pure gold, were hollow, and of course of very barbaric execution."

Dasent was once staying at Walmer Castle with Count Herbert Bismarck (the son of the great Bismarck), at that time attached to the German Embassy in London. The Count, with questionable taste, alluded to the bad quality of the brandy which he generally got in visiting English country houses, and said that as a precaution he always took a bottle of brandy with him on these occasions. Dasent remarked quite seriously that he entirely agreed, and that for his part he never went on a visit without taking two bottles. Everybody else giggled, but the thick-witted German missed the point of the remark, opened his eyes and his mouth, and said, "What? No! *Two* bottles!"

Dasent was once staying at Holmbury, Mr. Leveson's beautiful place in Surrey, at the same time as Mr. Gladstone. Mr.

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Disraeli was at that time Prime Minister. Dasent told of him the following story.

" I met Dizzy in Bond Street the other day, and he told me that he had just been to the private view at the Royal Academy, and said that he had never seen such a wretched exhibition of incompetence; nothing but tawdry daubs without a trace of genius and even hardly of talent anywhere." He added that it was pitiable that English art should have fallen so low.

Dasent then alluded to the speech which Disraeli made the same evening at the R.A. dinner, where he said : " It is one of the few refreshments and consolations of a jaded minister, harassed by innumerable cares, and with the burdens of State weighing heavily upon his shoulders, to be able to come here and gaze around him at the resplendent specimens of British art which he sees glowing in all their beauty of form and colour upon these walls."

" Rather comic, wasn't it ? " added Dasent.

Mr. Gladstone, glowering like a thundercloud, called out " Comic ! Do you call that comic ? I call it devilish ! "

The Civil Service was proud to welcome into its ranks, as a Commissioner of Customs and then Comptroller of the Stationery Office, a philosopher so distinguished as Mr. W. R. Greg, who was born at Manchester in 1809, and gained a greater reputation for literary and philosophical work than for official success. After an education at the University of Edinburgh he won a prize offered by the Anti-Corn Law League for the best essay on "Agriculture and the Corn Laws." In 1851 he became known as the author of the "Creed of Christendom." Mr. Morley recorded the effect in its day of this contribution to "dissolving literature."[1] Greg's article in the "Westminster Review" was considered as the finest tribute of the many called forth by Sir Robert Peel's death. His writings on these and political subjects drew forth the admiration of Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who appointed

[1] "Both William Greg and his favourite brother were of what is called, with doubtful fitness, the feminine temperament. It was much less true of William than of Samuel Greg; but it was in some degree true of him also that, though firm, tenacious and infinitely patient, he rather lacked that harder and tougher fibre, both of mind and frame, which makes the battle of life so easy and so successful to many men." ("Critical Miscellanies," vol. iii, "W. R. Greg: a sketch," J. Morley.)

him a Commissioner on the Board of Customs, and he subsequently became the Controller of the Stationery Office. He was thoroughly distrustful of the popular element in politics, was prophetically apprehensive of the approaching development of democracy, and wrote many political problems under such titles as the "Enigma of Life" and "Rocks Ahead, or the Warnings of Cassandra." He died in 1881.

LORD THRING, SIR H. OWEN, SIR R. MEADE, SIR A. BLACKWOOD, SIR ROBERT HAMILTON, LORD CARDWELL, SIR R. THOMPSON, LORD HALIBURTON, SIR R. KNOX



CHAPTER XI

LORD THRING, SIR H. OWEN, SIR R. MEADE, SIR A. BLACKWOOD, SIR ROBERT HAMILTON, LORD CARDWALL, SIR R. THOMPSON, LORD HALIBURTON, SIR R. KNOX

LORD THRING was best known as a great parliamentary draftsman, drafting Mr. Gladstone's Succession Act of 1853 and the great Shipping Act, which for forty years was the code of British merchant shipping law, and the Companies Act of 1862.

In 1867, after the withdrawal of what was termed "the Ten Minutes Bill," a new bill prepared by Sir Philip Rose was sent to him, and he expressed his disapproval of it. Thring was asked to put himself into communication with the author, and while so engaged he received a message from Disraeli on Thursday, March 13, through Montague Corry, that the bill was to be entirely redrafted by Saturday, the 16th. On Friday, Thring took the bill in hand, and working

with two shorthand writers completed and laid it before the Cabinet on Saturday; it was considered by Disraeli on Monday, the 18th, and circulated on Tuesday, the 19th. A marvel of lightning drafting!

On Mr. Lowe coming into office, he made with Sir H. Thring, as he then was, a great step towards improving the machinery of the Drafting Department, and decreed that all Government bills should be drafted in that office instead of by different departments.

In 1869 and 1871 the work was tremendous, but Thring surmounted all his difficulties by hard work through a long life, and was considered not only a great draftsman, but a great legislator, and died after having become a peer in 1907. On his retirement, like many other industrious civil servants, he devoted what is called his "rest" to constant work on the Surrey County Council and in the management of the Holloway College. He was followed by Jenkins, a worthy successor.

On one occasion he was in consultation with a minister who thought he had abbreviated Jenkins's clauses and showed him



SIR ROBERT MEADE



his suggested improvement, and asked him to look at it, which he did, and said if any of his juniors had given him such a clause he should have dismissed him next morning.

Sir Hugh Owen was Secretary to the Local Government Board and worked with Sir Charles Dilke with extraordinary assiduity in the preparation of the Local Government Bill. A friend of mine in high office went one night during the Fenian outbreak and found Sir Hugh working away at 11 o'clock at night. He noticed tears running down his cheeks and asked him what was the matter. "I fear," said Sir Hugh, "that my little girl is dying and I shall not see her again." My friend insisted on his leaving the bill and going home at once. Shortly after his departure a bomb fell and smashed the chair Sir Hugh had been sitting on at his midnight work. This is what we call a coincidence. "Punch" described the bitter cry of Bumbledom on the approach of Sir Charles Dilke's bill : "and I'd like to heave bricks at that Dilke and his long-winded myrmidon Owen."

Robert Meade, who retained till his death the name of "Bobsy," a sure sign of affec-

tionate intimacy, was the second son of Lord Clanwilliam, whose extraordinary charm he inherited. As a young man he was appointed by Prince Albert to accompany Edward Prince of Wales on his visit to the Holy Land. Originally in the Foreign Office, he was chosen private secretary to Lord Granville when President of the Council in 1852. In 1862 he was made a Groom of the Chamber to the Prince of Wales, and in the following year he accompanied Lord Granville when he was abroad with Queen Victoria. In 1865 he was again appointed private secretary to Lord Granville on his becoming Secretary of State to the Colonies, and in 1870, when that Minister was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In 1871 he returned to the Colonial Office to be Assistant Under-Secretary, when he earned the highest distinction in service with many chiefs, including Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who knew the value of a good man. When there he was shocked at the way executions were carried out at Malta, and sent for the executioner, who I think at the time was Marwood, to consult him on how some improvement could be effected.

Marwood was most enthusiastic in favour of what he called the "long drop."

"Why," said he, "Mr. Peace was a little man and I gave him the 'long drop,' and 'e passed hoff like a summer's heve."

"Bobsy" was selected to be a Royal Commissioner for the Paris Exhibition of 1877, and was a British delegate to the Conference on African questions at Berlin in 1884, where he had some interviews with Prince Bismarck, and many more with his secretary, who led him to believe that Bismarck was in favour of all his views, while at the same time he was doing all he could to subvert them—a complete example of German duplicity.

He possessed a wonderfully attractive personality and a beautiful voice, which gave him the power of speaking his mind, yet never giving offence. On one occasion when in the country he was asked to dine by a royal duke, and he said: "Oh dear no, sir! If I was to dine with you I should be asked to dine with all my neighbours, which would be terrible," and this unusual answer gave no offence. On another occasion, when the Government had got into some

scrape, he said : "If they would only refer these things to a cabinet of private secretaries these troubles would not occur."

Sir Robert Meade, as he had become, was a man of singular calm and solid judgment, and absolutely repudiated the myth which spoke of him and his master as pleasure-seeking men who preferred pleasure to business. Never was a greater mistake. They enjoyed amusements, but never neglected business.

Arthur Blackwood was born in May 1832. He was a messmate of mine at Eton in Angelo's House. In 1852 he left Cambridge and obtained a clerkship in the Treasury, and was one of the best-looking young men of London society. In the spring of 1854 war broke out between Russia and Turkey, England and France, and volunteers were called for by the head of the Commissariat Department. Blackwood immediately volunteered, and at once started with Herbert Murray, another volunteer and a brother clerk in the Treasury, for the Crimea, giving up his London society, of which he had been a keen and popular member.

It was not long before the commissariat



SIR ARTHUR BLACKWOOD



chief wrote to Sir Charles Trevelyan at the Treasury, saying all his officers were doing well and Mr. Blackwood in particular had distinguished himself, etc. etc.

In his diary he describes most accurately, as I will not, the details of that unhappy war. He was a strong temperance advocate. Before returning to England he had become what he called "religious," and what that is I will not attempt to describe; but this I know, that no man ever became a braver or more true and earnest Christian. The Treasury welcomed his return. After his work there, faithfully performed, he inaugurated meetings among the poor, and later on, with increasing courage, he addressed those who in earlier days had been among his friends in society.

In 1874 he was appointed Financial Secretary to the Post Office, where he started many reforms, amongst which was the parcel post, which involved long interviews with foreign governments; but in 1883 his health gave way.

Looking back to my friend and schoolfellow, I can think of no finer character and no more Christian gentleman.

Robert Hamilton was described by Lord Lingen as the most all-round man he ever saw, and his career would seem to justify Lord Lingen's opinion. At the beginning a temporary clerk in the War Office, he was soon chosen during the Crimean War as a clerk in the Commissariat Department, and after good work he was employed in the Office of Works, and from there he was chosen to take charge of the finance of the Education Department and the Board of Trade—two difficult jobs. In the latter office he became an assistant secretary and acted as a member of a Civil Service inquiry at Dublin. He then became Secretary to the Admiralty, but he had by no means come to the end of his varied career, for after the awful tragedy of "Tom" Burke's murder in the Phœnix Park, he was called upon to take charge of affairs in that unhappy country as Permanent Secretary. He was made a C.B., and soon after a K.C.B., for services he rendered.

From experiences he gained in Ireland he became a convinced Home Ruler, and was a strong advocate of Mr. Gladstone's Bill; and on its rejection he was appointed

Governor of Tasmania, which office he held until 1873, when he returned to this country and took an active part in framing Mr. Morley's schemes for the adjustment of the financial relations between England and Ireland.

In all the varied offices he held, and the experience he gained, he was a remarkable instance of what can be achieved by an honest devotion to work—work so little known or valued by the world at large.

Mr. (afterwards Lord) Cardwell was Secretary of State for the War Department in Mr. Gladstone's great Government of 1868, when he initiated the system of short service and abolished by royal warrant purchase in the Army, after the bill with that object was defeated in the House of Lords.

These important reforms were the result of great and unceasing labour, but fortunately for him he had at his disposal three efficient and experienced men well able to grapple with the difficulties before him.

Sir Ralph Thompson was not only an excellent official, but he possessed many of the qualities of a statesman. It must be remembered that he had to deal with

soldiers who were for the most part untrained in business habits. This was no easy task, and required the exercise of tact, judgment, and unfailing good temper. All these qualities he possessed to a great degree.

On his retirement he left a box behind him containing a great number of letters, consisting mainly of violent attacks from irascible soldiers on some of his subordinates. These he wisely put aside, trusting to the softening effects of time to mitigate the asperities which would only have led, had they been answered, to a vain and angry correspondence.

Lord Haliburton, born in 1832 in Nova Scotia, was the son of the clever and witty Sam Slick, "the inventor," as Artemus Ward said, "of American humour."

His earlier days were spent in organising a new commissariat which the disasters attending the Crimean War had shown to be necessary. In looking at his work at that time, it is delightful in these spendthrift days to see how Haliburton was an advocate of true economy. He made for himself a great reputation in his conduct of the transport and travelling allowances

in the Army, and was able to make large reductions in expenditure. He became an Assistant Director of Supplies and Transport. Mr. Cardwell's plan of bringing the Horse Guards and the Commander-in-Chief to the War Office in Pall Mall required all his energies and determination, and in this reform Haliburton was the chief actor.

In 1872 Haliburton, at Lord Northbrook's request, was sent as Deputy Accountant-General to India, and re-entered the War Office in 1875 as Under-Secretary of State.

Sir Ralph Knox was Accountant-General of the Army for fifteen years (1882-1897) before he became Permanent Under-Secretary. He was a faithful economist, and won the respect of such men as Lord Welby and Sir Francis Mowatt at the Treasury, who appreciated and admired the financial ability with which he combated the unceasing and extravagant demands for unnecessary expenditure. His intelligent and merciless criticisms of ill-digested plans did not lead to his popularity, but, as a soldier once said to Mr. Fawcett, who was then his private secretary and who went later to the War Office, " Knox is always objecting to our

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plans, and the worst of it is he is always right."

He was one of the chief advisers of Mr. Cardwell in advocating the short-service system which, as has been said before, that statesman introduced; an organisation of the British Army which in spite of much opposition has held its ground.

All good officials have their peculiarities and defects, and Knox had a great dislike to any alteration in what he had once written, but it sometimes happened that during a long discussion, if his views were slightly modified, he showed a wonderful ingenuity in working round to any alteration.

H. CALCRAFT, SIR A. PANIZZI, SIR C. R. WILSON, A. TROLLOPE, SIR J. LAMBERT



CHAPTER XII

H. CALCRAFT, SIR A. PANIZZI, SIR C. R. WILSON, A. TROLLOPE, SIR J. LAMBERT

HENRY CALCRAFT, who must not be omitted from any list of remarkable civil servants, was a thorough man of the world with a great sense of humour, an excellent judge of men, and conscientious and able. He was John Bright's private secretary at the Board of Trade, and master and man got on well together. Subsequently he became Secretary of the department. Before that I met him one day at a levee, where he said he had written on his card : " Mr. Henry Calcraft, waiting for an appointment." A pushing clerk in his department had, somehow or another, a small Norwegian order, and bothered his chief to obtain Royal leave to wear it. At last Calcraft told him there was no occasion for it, for he could always wear it when he was dining at home with his wife.

Calcraft was the name of the public executioner at that time, which gave his friends the opportunity of making bad jokes. On his entering his club somebody said : " When I come to London the hangman is always the first person I see." "You may be sure," said Calcraft, " he will be the last."

He was a friend of Lord Beaconsfield, and wrote a book on his " witty sayings," which I am sorry to say is out of print.

Sir Anthony Panizzi was one of the most remarkable men of his day. Beginning his career at Parma, he there became in very early days an Inspector of Schools, and, notwithstanding his position, conspired with other young men of his age in exposing the horrid iniquities of those days. He was arrested, but escaped, and at Lugano he busied himself denouncing the cruelties and injustices of the Modenese Government. He was indicted in his absence and sentenced to death, but, ignoring the harmless sentence, came to London, where he was welcomed by Ugo Foscolo, by whom he was introduced to Lord Brougham, who, as chancellor and trustee of the British Museum, appointed him

as assistant librarian. He had established his reputation as a clever literary man, but his talents were not appreciated as they ought to have been by his chief, who employed him chiefly in cataloguing old pamphlets. He managed, however, to write an essay which endeared him to all lovers of Italian literature in this country, and brought him into the social life of Holland House, where there is a portrait of him by Mr. Watts.

Many inquiries into Museum affairs gave him the opportunity of showing his brilliant attainments. In 1850—after twenty years—he had succeeded in presenting a comprehensive catalogue of the huge library. Two years after this he had conceived his idea of the reading-room, which we all know and few of us fully appreciate. He laid down the principles on which a national museum should be moulded—not as a show only, but as an institution for the diffusion of culture. It should be a department of the Civil Service and managed liberally.

Princess Liechtenstein says of him that he " has a lasting title to gratitude as the

public designer of the far-famed reading-room in the Museum and as being almost the founder of the national library." His end was not a very happy one, for he felt neglected. On Lord Granville's visiting him, he on one occasion begged that he would never come again, but it was impossible to lead Lord Granville into a quarrel, and he paid many more visits to the sick man's bedside.

Mr. Gladstone also visited him, and I well recollect his saying how easily we were affected by the conveniencies of locality, for the visits to Hayward, who lived in St. James's, were twice as many as to the great man who was ill in Bloomsbury, and yet there could be no comparison between the two men.

Sir Charles Rivers Wilson has himself written an account of a very interesting life which brought him into contact with many of the foremost men at home and abroad.[1] He was one of the first to enter the Civil

[1] Rivers Wilson says when he was Disraeli's private secretary that he was a farceur, having always his tongue in his cheek and not pretending to be serious when he was behind the scenes. He never began to be serious till at the time of the Berlin Conference.

Service under the new system of competitive examinations. He was successful in being appointed to the Treasury, and was singularly lucky in taking the place of Sir Charles Fremantle, who for a time had been employed elsewhere, as private secretary to Mr. Disraeli, of whom he tells many good stories. Soon after, he became private secretary to Mr. Lowe when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and invented the admirable match tax, with the motto of "Ex luce lucellum," which was unfortunately given up.

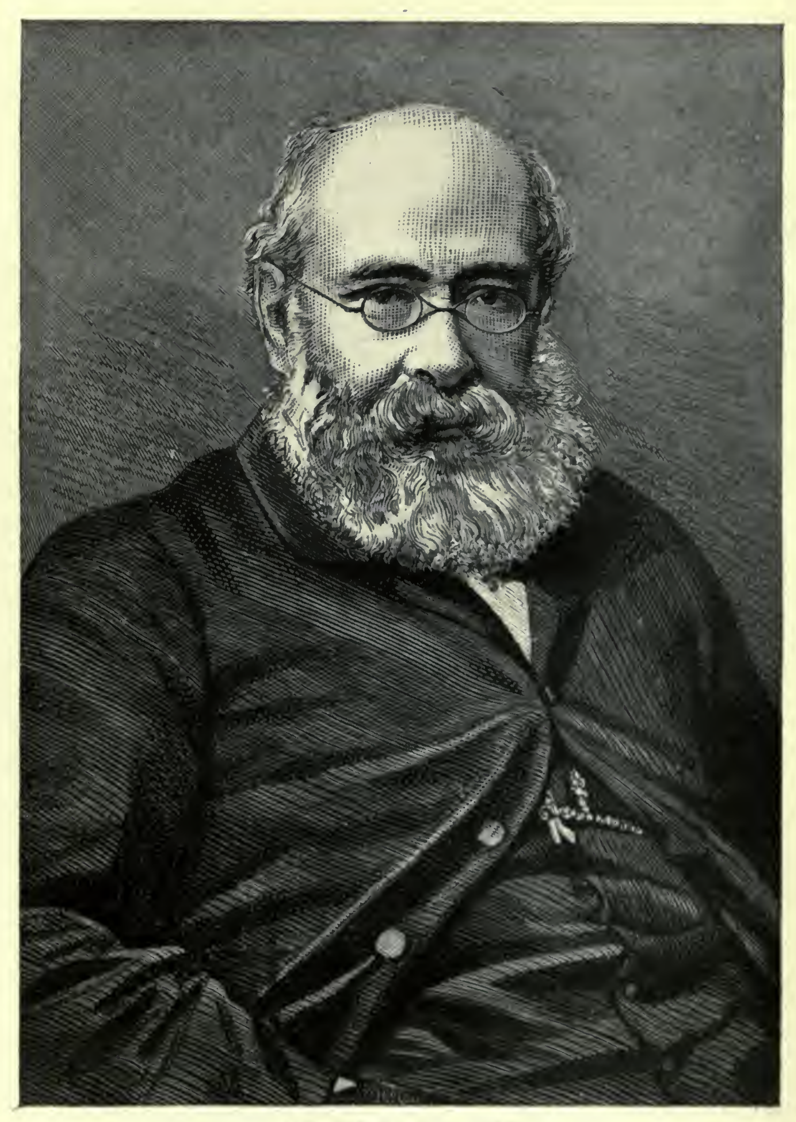
In 1867 Sir Charles was appointed to act as a delegate with Dr. Graham, the Master of the Mint, on the International Monetary Conference at Paris, where his perfect knowledge of the French language was of the greatest use.

He was also one of the Commissioners of the Paris Exhibition, and in 1873 was appointed Comptroller of the National Debt.

He tells an excellent story of a certain annuitant upon whose life the insurance companies had largely invested, who used to present himself half-yearly at his office to prove his existence. The clerks, to

whom he was well known as a garrulous old gentleman, had some doubts as to his real age, so at last a trap was laid for him when he presented himself at the counter. Drawn into conversation by a remark as to his wonderful health, considering his age of ninety-five, he agreed that he was well and healthy, but, he said, "I am only eighty-two." "No," said the clerk, "you are quite wrong, you are ninety-five, and I can prove it"; and thereupon he produced from a pigeonhole the certificate of birth which was given to the office when first the annuity was bought. On reading the document the applicant, apparently much puzzled, said, "Yes, that's my name sure enough, and that's the place where my father and mother lived and where my mother was born," and then he suddenly exclaimed, "I have it! This certificate is that of my elder brother, who died thirteen years before I was born and after whom I was named." He was very indignant at the fraud to which he had been unconsciously a party. This led to a great controversy with the insurance offices, which had to refund a huge sum.





ANTHONY TROLLOPE

On retirement from the National Debt Office Sir Charles was chosen to go out to the United States as a representative of the bondholders of the Central Pacific Railway. He gallantly accepted the proposal, though he had little experience of railway administration or finance. On his return he was unanimously selected as President of the Grand Trunk, an office he held to within a short time of his death.

His reputation as a financier will extend beyond the confines of this country, though much of his life was spent in the service of the Treasury.

Those who have read Anthony Trollope's "Autobiography" will be struck by the picture of his sad boyhood at home, but in 1834 he was given a clerkship in the General Post Office. Great reforms were then in progress. Sir Francis Freeling was reorganising the entire service, and Trollope was dreaming of what might be done by a junior clerk, and was little better than a grumbling and insubordinate official. But Sir Francis Freeling was a friend of his, and in 1850 sent him to Ireland as a Post

Office Inspector, where he was so efficient that he was transferred to London in the same position, where he quarrelled with the chief, Sir Rowland Hill; but his strenuous and real loyalty to the department which he loved prevented the quarrel becoming serious. He acknowledges in his "Autobiography" that he had an opinion of his own and made himself very disagreeable and often tried to be so. He could be abrupt at times as well as disagreeable. At a meeting of Post Office surveyors, when one of them made a speech, Trollope jumped up, saying: "I entirely disagree with you. What is it you said?"

His novel "The Three Clerks" and his picture of Sir Gregory Hardlines made him very unpopular amongst officials at that time, but another generation forgave his delightful and amusing satire.

He planned out for every day and for every hour the minutes he would allot to literary work, and numbered the lines he would write in a given time, rising at five o'clock. How different was this almost mechanical work from that of Thackeray, who on one occasion refused a jovial dinner

at Richmond with some pleasant friends because he had not written an article overdue. On their return from that dinner his friends looked in on him to learn how he had got on with his article. Not one line had he written!

But we must leave Trollope and his writings and revert to the Post Office, where he invented the system of postage stamps being sold in country villages and the convenience of letter-boxes, which are now so common and so useful.

Sir John Lambert, who was born in February 1815, was a Roman Catholic and received his education at St. Gregory's College in Somersetshire.

In 1854 he was elected Mayor of Salisbury, and was the first Roman Catholic who was mayor of a cathedral city since the Reformation.

In 1847 he was appointed a Poor Law Inspector, and the fame of his good work reached the ears of Mr. Charles Villiers, then President of the Poor Law Board, who summoned him to London to advise him on the Relief Acts and Public Works Act, which were passed on his recommen-

dation, and of which he was called to be administrator.

In 1865 and 1867 he was engaged in preparation of statistics for the Reform Bills of those years. He was also a member of the Parliamentary Boundaries Commission and of other commissions on Irish Church lands and on landed properties in Great Britain, which produced what was called the Modern Domesday Book. He was subsequently Secretary of the Local Government Board and established his position as the recognised authority on all matters connected with the franchise and distribution of seats. In similar work he continued to advise in all parliamentary matters after his retirement from ill-health in 1882.

SIR E. DUCANE, SIR E. HAMILTON, LORD SANDFORD, SIR R. PALGRAVE, F. T. PALGRAVE, SIR K. DIGBY, A. LIDDELL, SIR G. LUSHINGTON, LORD ROWTON, SIR H. COLE, F. SCUDAMORE



CHAPTER XIII

SIR E. DUCANE, SIR E. HAMILTON, LORD SANDFORD, SIR R. PALGRAVE, F. T. PALGRAVE, SIR K. DIGBY, A. LIDDELL, SIR G. LUSHINGTON, LORD ROWTON, SIR H. COLE, F. SCUDAMORE

IN June 1894 I was a member of a committee appointed to inquire into the whole question of prison administration. I was, following the recommendation of that committee, a visitor of the Woking Convict Prison and subsequently chairman of the committee appointed to deal with the discipline of that establishment. In all those positions I had ample opportunities of seeing the important duties of Sir Edmund Ducane. These duties we found to be well performed, and they were arduous and many. He was practically the head under the Home Office of all the civil prisons in England—an enormous responsibility; but it was felt after the report of the Committee that the time had arrived for a change which should be adopted by his successor with equal

knowledge and perhaps with greater elasticity in the conduct of prison affairs. Those, we said in our report, who have to administer a system year by year are inclined to stereotype practices which they know have produced good results and to assume for that reason that they must permanently form the basis of management. Sir Edward Ducane had held an exceptional and it may be said a commanding position, but the time for a change had come. We were not insensible to the value of Sir Edmund's services in the past, and Mr. Asquith, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, told me that he looked upon him as the best economist he had known in the spending departments of the Government.

Edward Hamilton, born in 1847, was the son of the Bishop of Salisbury. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and entered the Treasury in 1870. He was private secretary to Lowe when Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to Mr. Gladstone.

In 1885 he became a principal clerk in the financial branch of the Treasury, and subsequently assistant secretary and joint permanent secretary with Sir George Murray.



SIR EDWARD HAMILTON



He was painstaking and industrious and very popular, but the glory of his life was the magnificent courage with which he faced a protracted and painful illness, in which he had the sympathy of a large number of friends.

I was present at an official dinner in honour of the King's birthday given by Mr. Asquith, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he said that, departing from the hitherto unbroken rule of no speeches, he had the King's permission to announce His Majesty's bestowal on Edward Hamilton of the honour of the Grand Cross of the Bath.

Lord Sandford obtained a first class at Balliol. In 1848 he entered the Education Office and became secretary and permanent head of that department, and was a powerful worker in the organisation of the National System of Education created by W. E. Forster's Act of 1870, which mainly occupied the business of that session. He also acted as Secretary to the Education Department and to the Science and Art Department, but it was impossible, although he was an indefatigable worker, that he could perform all these various duties, and

in 1885 he became the first Under-Secretary for Scotland.

Sir Reginald Palgrave was the fourth son of Sir Francis Palgrave, and commenced his career in a solicitor's office, but in 1853 he obtained a clerkship in the House of Commons, where he became second clerk assistant in 1868 and succeeded Sir Erskine May as Clerk at the Table in 1886, which office he held until his retirement in 1900.

He carried out to completion much of his predecessor's work relating to the rules, orders, and forms of procedure of the House and the practical Treatise of the Law of Parliament. He died in 1904.

Francis Turner Palgrave, eldest son of Sir Francis Palgrave, was born in 1824. In 1846 he was assistant private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies and for War. He then accepted an appointment in the Education Department, where he became Examiner and Assistant Secretary. He was a great friend of Tennyson, and in 1854 published a volume of poems, and was a prolific art critic in the "Saturday" and "Quarterly"

reviews. He was the author anonymously of "The Passionate Pilgrim." In 1861 was published "The Golden Treasury," which still retains its great popularity. Sir Edward Cooke says that of all the books of that kind it has seen more cities and fields and hills in the pockets of more sorts and conditions of men than any other book.

Lord Morley's favourite travelling poetry book was "Matthew Arnold," which was his cherished companion on many a journey.

In 1884 Francis Palgrave resigned the secretaryship in the Education Department, and in 1885 he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, holding the chair for ten years, and died in 1897.

Sir Kenelm Digby was looked upon, and properly looked upon, as an ideal head of a public department. He had legal experience at the Bar and as a judge of a county court, but he did not confine his views to points of law only, but was a born administrator.

He was dignified and genial, indefatigable at his work, never irritable or tired, open-minded and always ready to consider difficulties and objections to what he proposed,

but determined when a decision had been arrived at and a definite course taken.

Adolphus Liddell left a good position at the Bar for the Under-Secretaryship of State at the Home Office. Of all officials that I ever had the honour of knowing he was the most unofficial. He was no respecter of persons; secretaries of state and junior clerks were alike on terms of familiarity with him, red-tape was unknown to him, and I have known him in the middle of a serious discussion whistle a popular air.

He was admirable in his management of a department like the Home Office, where so many and varied subjects had to be dealt with; on all legal questions his advice was of the greatest use to all the secretaries of state that he served. His collie dog was his inseparable companion, and I can see him now walking at uncertain hours across the Horse Guards Parade with his collie by his side, which followed him into his official room. This I am sorry to say gave some offence to many mayors and deputations, who were somewhat alarmed at the apparent hostile attitude assumed towards

them as intruders, but Liddell's invariable good-temper soon allayed their fears and restored peace, and they—the secretary, the mayor and the dog—parted the best of friends.

In the Home Office he left a reputation of being possessed of a clear judgment, always coming to his point in the fewest possible words.

Sir Godfrey Lushington, who succeeded him as Under-Secretary, was in every way unlike him. He was a hard worker and with a certain ability, but wanting in his bonhomie and popularity. He had about him much of the schoolmaster—honest, laborious and painstaking, but lacking in personal interest on subjects which came before him. There is an account current in his office, when some question of vivisection came before him, that he said something which implied that he did not consider a dog was a mammal, and he referred the question to the inspector, who replied that a dog was certainly a mammal, as was an elephant and a baby. But he fell on days when there was no trouble, as there was in later times about suffragettes, Sinn Feiners,

conscientious objectors, and constant strikers.

Montague Corry, afterwards Lord Rowton, began his career at the Bar, but before he advanced far in his profession had the good fortune to meet Mr. Disraeli at a country house-party, when he told me how embarrassed he was at finding himself "playing the fool" as the great man entered the room. But he "played the fool" so well that Mr. Disraeli told him that if ever he wanted an improvisatore he should apply to him. Shortly afterwards came a change of Government, and Mr. Disraeli became the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Corry wrote reminding him of the kind words he had used to him when they met, and asking him if he would help him to get a private secretaryship to any of his colleagues. He was summoned to Downing Street, and difficulties which at one time seemed insuperable were to his delight removed. He became secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, a happy arrangement for master and man, for from that moment a great friendship sprang up between them, which lasted till Lord Beaconsfield's death. Corry was a popular



LORD ROWTON



man of the world, as he deserved to be, and possessed all the charms of an Irishman, always "smiling though the whole world sighed—always dancing when the fiddle stopt —always faithful till the curtain dropt." But greater than his services to Lord Beaconsfield and his success in London society was his creation of the buildings which bear and ever will bear his name, where working men could live at a small cost. The first of these houses was erected in Vauxhall at a cost of £30,000 to accommodate about 500 men. In 1894 he became chairman of a company possessing a capital of £450,000, and houses were erected in various parts of London and in Birmingham which have proved a great success, providing accommodation for many thousands of poor and almost destitute men, who find there shelter, warmth and cheap food. By his personal efforts he produced money for these buildings, but, what was more than money, he obtained the active co-operation of Sir Richard Farrant, without whose assistance the scheme could not have been a success. He succeeded Lord Rowton as chairman.

At the London County Council as an

alderman I vainly attempted, after consultation with Lord Rowton, to provide similar houses for women. The financial difficulties no doubt were very great, but these were overcome by the munificence of Mrs. Lewis, and the Ada Lewis hostel for women was started and has proved a complete success, every room being occupied by women on the principles of the Rowton Houses.

Sir Henry Cole was educated at Christ's Hospital, and while young he was employed by Sir Francis Palgrave in transcribing records and employed his spare time in watercolour painting with some success, for he exhibited some sketches in the Royal Academy, and by his father he was introduced to J. S. Mill, Charles Buller and George Grote. In 1838 the Record Office was instituted, and Cole was appointed a senior assistant keeper and succeeded in having a proper building erected for the care of the valuable records of the country. In 1838 he became secretary of a commission appointed for promoting postal reforms. Cobden was so much impressed with his ability and industry that he offered him



SIR HENRY COLE



the secretaryship of the Anti-Corn Law League.

His proposals for postal reforms were adopted, and from 1838 to 1842 he was employed in working out the details of the scheme. Subsequently he became Chairman of the Society of Arts, which held exhibitions of ancient and mediæval decorations. These exhibitions led to the idea of the Great Exhibition of 1851, which was warmly fathered by the Prince Consort. A commission was appointed, consisting of Sir C. Dilke, Robert Stephenson and Digby Wyatt, but Cole was the most energetic member of it. Lord Granville had already offered him the secretaryship of the School of Design, and the balance of the profits of the Great Exhibition was devoted to this school, which numbered nearly a hundred branches throughout the country, and there are probably many more at this moment. Cole devoted his energies to the building now well known as the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is replete with works of art. Cole was also successful in starting the National College of Music. His was a wonderful life of devotion to his love of

art, and he was before his death able to see the huge success of all that he had put his hand to.

Hitherto I have dwelt on the modesty of the Civil Service, but Cole was not of those who hid his lantern under a bushel; in consequence he was assailed and sometimes ridiculed on all his doings.

F. Scudamore was appointed to the Post Office in 1841, and in 1861 he had prepared a scheme for postal savings banks, Government insurances and annuities. He was the chief negotiator in the telegraph business of the country being undertaken by the Government, but his zeal unluckily outran his discretion, and in his ardour he undertook vast expenditure without Treasury authority. His energy and administrative qualities were very great, but as far as the State was concerned they ceased. He was not idle, and undertook telegraphic work in Turkey. He found things were so hopelessly delayed that he resigned his work there and indulged his literary tastes. He died at Therapia in 1884.

LORD WELBY



CHAPTER XIV

LORD WELBY

IN the year of the Great Reform Bill of 1832, Reginald Welby was born in the Rectory of Hareston, Lincolnshire, the youngest son of the Rev. John Earle Welby, the Rector. In the churchyard of Allington, close by, at his own wish, he now lies. He was sent to Eton in 1845, where he won some distinction as a football player, being one of the Field eleven and of the Oppidan eleven at the Wall, where he successfully played against Collegers in 1850. He also rowed in the "ten oar" in 1851. He was "sent up for good" and in the same year became President of "Pop." Here he began to show his financial instincts; the Society was then in debt, but he at once obtained from old members sufficient to make it solvent. As second Captain of the Oppidans he was in "the select" for the Newcastle Scholarship in his last year.

From Eton he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, and after taking his degree he acted for a time as private secretary to Henry Austen Layard, for whom he had a great admiration.

He had thoughts of being called to the Bar, but his old Eton friend, Arthur Hayter, now Lord Haversham, asked his father, Sir William, who was then Patronage Secretary, to get him nominated for a clerkship in the Treasury by the Prime Minister with others for a competitive examination. Lord Palmertson agreed, and Welby was first of three candidates in the examination, and so began an official career which was destined to end so successfully. He was soon singled out as a young man of promise, and became private secretary to succeeding parliamentary secretaries.

In 1880 he became Assistant Financial Secretary and Auditor of the Civil List, when he prepared a scheme for its reform, which, however, was not adopted, and in 1885, in succession to Lord Lingen, he became Permanent Secretary, an office which he held until his retirement in 1894.

During the tenure of these high offices he served under, and advised, no fewer than twelve Chancellors of the Exchequer, to whom his shrewd perception of figures, his indefatigable industry, and his love of work, were of inestimable value. What was said of Godolphin might well have been said of him, "that he was never in the way and never out of the way." He always took the strictest view of the duties of civil servants. On one occasion some of us thought he overstrained to a quixotic degree his abhorrence of betraying official secrets. Late one evening Sir Stafford Northcote acquainted him with the fact that Parliament was going to be dissolved on the following day ; on his way home he met an old friend, who was starting for the Riviera that night, and was also a candidate for Parliament at the next election. Welby knew this and also that his friend, on reaching Cannes, would hear the news and would have to start home at once, but no whisper did Welby utter, and his friend, a poor man, had his journey for nothing. Being himself a man with a keen sense of right and wrong he did not easily forgive

those who strayed in any way from the road of probity.

He was devoid of the power of devolution, and would occupy hours of valuable time in doing work which might have been done as well, if not better, by a junior clerk. He would often use a razor to cut a block. Frequently when seeing him on some point of official business, after talking for a long time on every sort of irrelevant matter, we found that the subject which we came to discuss was not even touched upon. As such interviews were usually connected with applications for expenditure, it has been said that these apparently idle conversations were on his part a diplomatic avoidance of the application. His table at the Treasury was a chaos. At the time of the Wainwright murder, when the poor victim's limbs were cut up and distributed in various places, a cynical colleague was heard to say: "What a fool the murderer was—if he had put the body on Welby's table it would never have been discovered!" And yet some papers he would collect, docket, and arrange with the greatest exactitude. By the kindness of his relations I have seen diaries

and accounts, etc., beginning from his Eton days, containing the minutest details of journeys and expenses as well as copies of family letters, all carefully written out in his own hand. As Cardinal Newman truly said : "We are two or three selves at once."

Welby was by no means devoid of a spirit of satire. He once accounted for not keeping an appointment, for which we had been looking forward, by explaining to us that in the morning he had received a suggestion from the War Office that a chest of gold should be kept at each port for use in case of war. This proposal he considered so childish that he had occupied his afternoon in answering it in words of one syllable. I wonder if the sarcasm was duly seen and appreciated !

He told a story of himself of how a Cabinet minister, who shall be nameless, called on him to get some information, and when he went away he thought, "what an ass that man is ! He gets £5,000 a year and I only get £2,000 ; " and then he sent for the clerk who would supply the particulars required, and found him such a master of his subject that

he said, "that man only gets £150 a year whilst I get £2,000," and so the equilibrium was adjusted.

It was whispered in Downing Street that on Lord Welby's chimney-piece was a statuette of "The British Taxpayer" before which he performed his obeisance day and night. His friend Robert Meade, being summoned from the Colonial Office to a conference at the Treasury, wrote: "Dear Welby—Shall I bring my own coals with me, lest an excess should be caused on your vote for fuel and light?"

The public hardly estimates the importance of the duties of the financial adviser to a Chancellor of the Exchequer. These politicians were human and therefore different from each other in their views and wishes, and yet Welby obtained and retained the confidence and esteem of them all. The Chancellor who won his own admiration and affection in particular was Mr. Gladstone, who formed the highest opinion of his ability. Mr. Gladstone, who was always more than loyal to those who served him, appreciated deeply the character as well as the wisdom of his advice, and not only on

matters of finance. On Welby's elevation to the peerage he wrote a minute to the following effect: "After the signal honour which Her Majesty, in gracious acceptance of my advice, has been pleased to confer upon Sir Reginald Welby, it is not necessary for me to add any less emphatic testimony to his pre-eminent merits." It is vain to talk of what might have been, but I have always thought that if Welby had not been so faithfully and exclusively devoted to the somewhat restricted limit of the Treasury, he might have made his vast knowledge and ability play a greater part in the government of the country. In his room at Stratton Street I believe could be found carefully arranged papers that would furnish ample material for a history of his own times. These I hope may some day see the light.

His duties were not confined to his dealing alone with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he was frequently the trusted adviser of the Cabinet.

He took a leading part in questions relating to India, Egypt, and Ireland, and look where you will in any book dealing with modern finance will be found Welby's name

honourably mentioned. On Mr. Childers becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer, Welby described to him in a letter all the duties connected with his office in relation to the Treasury; and I believe that the rules for the conduct of business then laid down are in force to this very day.

I might as well give the list of the ships before Troy as attempt to tell the number of commissions and committees on which he served, and the many occasions when he was chosen as chairman—for, as Lord Granville once wittingly said of himself, he might have well earned the title of Père la Chaise.

He was opposed to the introduction of women typists in Government offices which I had started at Somerset House, but at last I persuaded him to let me bring to the Treasury a typist and put her in competition with the most skilled clerk he could produce. My typist came in the easiest of winners, and Welby gave up his objection with a good grace. There are now thousands of women clerks in Government employment, and "the cry is 'still they come.'" A former private secretary of his, now a distinguished



LORD WELBY



official, tells me how soon he grew to love him, and " I have loved him every since." Lord Allerton, the Financial Secretary, once asked him who was the youngest man in the Treasury ; he told him of a youth who was fresh from Oxford. " No," said Lord Allerton, " it is Welby."

To me his loss was irreparable. Not only were we bound by ties of early friendship, but by ties of long official intercourse. From 1868, when I first came into the Treasury as secretary to Mr. Gladstone, there were few days on which I was not in communication with him and Lord Frederick Cavendish. Our mutual admiration of Mr. Gladstone made all our meetings delightful. Then came the anxious days when we heard with some alarm of Lord Randolph Churchill's advent as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and our pleasure at finding him, after all, a chief whom we admired and delighted to serve. He persuaded me to join the London County Council. But I must not dwell on my personal loss.

While not only open to, but sympathetic with, the latest extension of Radical senti-

ment, he was in his personal habits an old-fashioned Tory. He regarded a hansom as a disagreeable innovation, "a shilling's-worth of danger;" he hated new American expressions such as "week-ends," etc., and never had a telephone.

During his official career he received many marks of distinction, beginning with a C.B. in 1874, a K.C.B. following in 1882, a G.C.B. in 1892, a peerage in 1894, and finally was sworn a Member of the Privy Council, which he always considered the highest honour in the power of the Crown to bestow.

Bernal Osborne, speaking of Sir James Graham's industry, compared him to an omnibus horse which had worked all day and in the evening harnessed himself to a cab, and the analogy would hold good with Welby. He indeed "filled the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run."

There is an old Persian proverb which says that "a stone that is fit for the wall is not left in the way," and a man with such a good character from his last place was eagerly sought for by boards in the city. One of his cleverest colleagues says of him,

in connection with his work there, that "he possessed all the attributes of a strong man. He picked up points rapidly and was quick to come to conclusions and also to accept corrections the moment he discovered he was wrong. . . . He had a phenomenally clear mind, rather spoilt, perhaps, by a taint of officialism. . . ." He was himself a transparently square and direct man, to whom all tortuous things were a torment.

Neither my editor nor my reader will allow me space to speak of the splendid work done by Lord Welby on the County Council of London, to which he was elected in 1906. He was chairman of the Finance Committee, and served also on the General Purposes Committee and many others, subsequently becoming chairman of the Council.

He would have furnished an admirable theme for discussion on psychology, and if I had the power I would like to dwell on the character of the man rather than on the points of his long official life which are now well known.

A distinguished friend of his and mine once described him as a man who kept his

friends in compartments, and so true is this that after a close and intimate friendship of over half a century I find he had many friends and relations of whom I had not even heard. Indeed I never thoroughly mastered the intricacies of his most interesting character, though no better or affectionate friend ever existed.

No one, however, could better diagnose the character of a man than he could, and the result of such diagnosis often ended in a very appropriate nickname. He belonged to nearly a dozen clubs. In his salad days he used to play whist at the Garrick with a generation of men who have now passed away, and in later years he would sumptuously entertain there parties of Parliamentary and official men on Budget nights. At meetings of the Cosmopolitan he was rarely absent, and was a most welcome member, who clung to it, even in its fading days, till the end came.

He joined the Cobden Club in 1895 and almost at once became chairman of committees. Being a convinced Free Trader he threw his whole energies in advancing the objects of the Club, and with Sir Louis

Mallet published a pamphlet on Cobden's work and opinions which must have cost him much thought and labour.

He presided at the International Free Trade Congress, and in 1907, at the age of seventy-five, he addressed from the chair at great length a meeting of the Club. He was President of the Royal Statistical Society, and a member of the Dilettanti Club, which was founded by Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gibbon, and Burke in 1764. Welby's portrait now hangs on the walls of the Club. He was also a member of "Grillon's"—and those of us who have read Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff's diary will remember how frequently his name is mentioned as dining at one and the other.

He was a great judge of wine, and kept up the old fashion of always sipping a drop of a new bottle before it was handed round to his guests, and I think it was at Grillon's that someone once said: "How do you like this '34 port?" "Very much," replied his neighbour, "it is as good as I give 36 for" —and Welby would have liked to have had that member excommunicated.

No human being that I have ever come

across in my journey through life was ever so richly endowed with the joie de vivre. When, a long time ago, we were a party of young men, a lady asked us what our several ambitions were: one said one thing, another another, but Welby at once said to live for 300 years; and later on, when the infirmities of advancing age were upon us, he said to me, " If I had the option of living on as I am I would compound for thirty years."

His personal unpunctuality was proverbial, and amounted to punctuality, inasmuch as you could always reckon upon his appearance at dinner a quarter of an hour after the appointed time.

I have seen it stated that he was unpopular, but it can only have been among those who wished to make inroads on the public purse at the Treasury, which was an office of refusals, and looked on him as a close-fisted tyrant, when as a matter of fact there was never a man so full of genial fun amounting to childish enjoyment of chaff.

He possessed a retentive memory and his knowledge of books and history was astonishing, but not half so astonishing as

how he found time and opportunity of gaining his information.

He always retained his love for the classics, though making no pretensions to being a scholar : he delighted in a good quotation, especially from Horace. He had intimate and strong friendship with individual women, but he had a poor opinion of them as a whole, thinking that as "female women," or "charms of life," as he called them, they were only meant to afford amusement to men. He seems to have been of the same mind as the Frenchman—"Je haïs le sex en gros ; je l'adore en detail ! " He would rarely talk to women seriously, and satisfied himself with conversational badinage, agreeing perhaps with Disraeli when he said : "Talk to women as much as you can, this is the way to gain fluency, because you need not care what you say, and had better not be sensible."

One of Welby's aphorisms of the same nature was "If women were reasonable, life would be insupportable." With these feelings about women he was always courteous and almost deferential. He was himself a smoker, but neither in his own house

nor on board a yacht would he allow himself or his friends to smoke in their presence or even in their rooms—even when women, to his great dislike, indulged in that practice themselves. He was strongly opposed to female suffrage.

He delighted, as only a Londoner could, in the beauty of the country, and was never what might be called a professional sportsman, but a couple of stags in the autumn or a brace of fish with Lord Bristol in Scotland, or twenty brace of pheasants in the coverts of Ickworth, where he shot with the guns which he called Ananias and Sapphira, I venture to think gave him greater pleasure than the sated sportsman would get from the best deer forest or the biggest battues. In the many autumns that he spent with us his long rides with my sons and daughter over the Surrey commons were a constant source of boyish delight. As a rule men love best what they do best, but he was an exception to this rule, being but a poor horseman and yet devoted to riding. Year after year he lived with us in the happy autumn days at Wanborough, a beautiful manor house with a history dating from

1500, and never a day passed in which we did not take long rides together to his infinite delight, even when, as was not uncommon, he parted company with his pony. He loved what he would call a junket, and every year he entertained on the banks of the Thames at Penton Hook a large party of Treasury men, among whom he was the merriest. The New Forest also was a country that he was passionately fond of, having been originally persuaded to go there by his great friend Edward Pember.

In this connection I cannot refrain from repeating a story in which he used to delight. A man on duty at a level-crossing was ordered to open his gates by an equerry of the impatient Kaiser who was then stopping in the neighbourhood. "Kaiser don't have no power over me," he said. "I'm a South-Western signalman."

I have not attempted to do more than refer to details which perhaps may serve in some little way to show the character of my friend. If I have erred in speaking of small idiosyncrasies and foibles I would quote a conversation between Lord Dufferin and Mr. Spurgeon. Lord Dufferin once

reproved the great preacher with being too frivolous in his sermons. Spurgeon answered, "If that is so I am like the archer and his bow—I fix the feather on the arrow to make it fly more surely and fix itself more deeply in the heart." If I have spoken of my friend's little peculiarities and prejudices it is only as a contrast to emphasise more clearly his noble character, his strict sense of honour, his generosity, and the loyalty and high standard of right which were ever conspicuous in him.

As Fielding in "Tom Jones:" says, "I hope my friends will pardon me when I declare I know none of them without a fault, and I should be sorry if I could imagine I had any friend who could not see mine; forgiveness of this kind we give and demand in turn. It is an exercise of friendship, and perhaps none of the least pleasant."

In December 1914 Welby was severely injured by being knocked down by a motor near St. George's Hospital. For some weeks he suffered from concussion of the brain, and later on he was considered as having recovered his usual health, but I do not think that he ever quite threw off the effects

of the fall, which diminished the power to resist an attack of jaundice which heralded his last illness. I was about to pay him a visit when I received a note saying that he was not well enough to play the host; the handwriting alarmed me, and I tried to see him as also many of his friends did, but he would see nobody.

He was lying at Malwood, the lovely house built by Sir William Harcourt in the New Forest.

He was wonderfully cared for by his old servant, who, with the nurses, watched over his sick-bed, and he passed away in perfect peace.

There is something very beautiful in the thought of his death among the falling leaves of the Forest—journeying to a home where there in no autumn and no death.



SIR S. PONSONBY, SIR F. MOWATT, SIR A. WOODS, SIR A. SCOTT GATTY



CHAPTER XV

SIR S. PONSONBY, SIR F. MOWATT, SIR A. WOODS, SIR A. SCOTT GATTY

SPENCER PONSONBY was born in 1824, the son of Lord Bessborough, at one time Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He gained admission into the Foreign Office at the early age of sixteen, where he at once commenced his education in the "Nursery." In whatever work he might have been engaged, he certainly became an efficient scholar, in singlestick, fives, and cricket, in which game he distinguished himself in later years, playing in Gentlemen and Players' and many important county matches.

In 1846 he was sent as an attaché to Washington, and on his return was appointed private secretary to Lord Palmerston, who in Lord Russell's Government was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Lord Palmerston told him that he must learn to write,

which he did, and achieved the handwriting for which the Foreign Office has ever been distinguished. At this time the session was occupied in domestic troubles rather than in foreign affairs, and Ponsonby with a young friend used to go and practise at Lord's in the mornings, for Foreign Office hours in those days were not of the earliest, and on their return they took a hansom to the extreme limit of the three-mile fare, and tossed up who should pay it and receive the objurgations of the driver as they ran down the Duke of York's steps into the Park. He also profited by the quotation used by his master, that "the very best way of prolonging the day was to steal a few hours from the night," for he became an habitué of Pratt's Club, where "mutton chops, grilled kidneys, and bottom crusts" were served till any hour of the morning.

After Lord Palmerston's resignation Ponsonby remained private secretary to Lord Clarendon and Lord Granville, and was present at the negotiations which led to the Treaty of Paris.

In the Canterbury Week so often described he was an autocrat and distinguished



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amateur, though the famous actress, Mrs. Keely, would not allow his being called an amateur, but an actor.

His knowledge of affairs led to his appointment as Controller of the Lord Chamberlain's Department, an office which he held until 1901. His position brought him into close and confidential relations both with Queen Victoria and King Edward. He was honorary treasurer of the Marylebone Cricket Club and took an active part in the management of finance and procedure. His name, with that of his brother Frederick, who afterwards became Lord Bessborough, will ever be remembered at Lord's as one of the early governors of I Zingari. The origin of the Club is interesting, but I can find no explanation of the adoption of its Italian name, or of the riband to be worn not only by members, but by their wives, daughters and sisters, signifying "From blackness through blood to gold," which is the same as that of Belgium. It is related, however, how a young man accosting a member of the exclusive Zingari, said: "Are you aware, sir, that you are wearing the colours of the Balham Second Eleven?"

Sitting one day in the pavilion of Lord's, somebody asked Mr. Penn: "What does Spencer Ponsonby do?" "Why, he umpires the balls of Buckingham Palace," was the answer.

In July 1845 Spencer Ponsonby, Baldwin and some others found themselves at supper at the Blenheim Hotel, Bond Street, when they then and there formed a Club, christened it I Zingari, framed rules, and on the following day elected a perpetual president and informed twenty of their friends that they were members of the Club, and issued the following rules and regulations:

"At a Meeting held—no matter when, and much less where—

Nobody, Chairman,

the following Rules and Regulations were proposed and unanimously adopted:

"Resolved: That a Club be founded for mutual cricket accommodation, which shall have the name and style of 'I Zingari.'

"That the Club be under the control of a Perpetual President, an Annual Vice-President, and a Biennial Committee of six members elected by the P. P.

"That no candidate be proposed unless so agreed at a meeting consisting of P.P., A.V.-P., and not less than two B.C. men. The mode of election as follows:

"The candidate shall be placed at a wicket with or without a bat, as the C. may decide, and be bowled at by the A.V.-P. or by any member of the I. *Z.* so deputed by A.V.-P. One straight ball to exclude. The number of balls given not to exceed the number of members comprising I. *Z.*

"That the entrance be nothing and the annual subscriptions do not exceed the entrance, etc. etc.

"That all directions connected with the game 'may' be conveyed in the French or Italian languages, etc. etc.

"That the colours of I. *Z.* be black, red, and gold—the gold at top. That they may be worn also by the wives, daughters, and sisters of I. *Z.*"

The extent of his popularity may be estimated by the number of dinners given in his honour by the cricketing world.

Mr. Lacey, the well-known secretary of the M.C.C., kindly tells me stories of Pon-

sonby's pluck and courage. One day when walking to Paddington Station he slipped and fell on his head and became insensible. On recovering, he found himself surrounded by a sympathetic crowd, and a policeman sending for an ambulance. "Nonsense," he said with emphasis, "I am going to walk," and he did with two broken ribs; and on the occasion of a Court function he rose from his bed in an agonising fit of rheumatism to do his duty. But the time came, as it must come to all of us, and when I saw him last he said, with a smile on his face, "Well, here I am as deaf as a post, as lame as a tree, as blind as a bat."

> "Lusirti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti,
> Tempus abire tibi est."

Even as I write, another old friend, Sir Francis Mowatt, has passed away into the silent land. Born in 1837, he was educated at Harrow and for a short time at Oxford, which he left without taking a degree on having gained, under Lord Palmerston's scheme of limited competition, a clerkship in the Treasury, where he remained for forty-seven years.





SIR FRANCIS MOWATT

From that day to the day of his retirement he must have served under no less than a dozen Chancellors of the Exchequer, among them Sir G. C. Lewis, Mr. Gladstone more than once, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Lowe, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Childers, Sir M. Hicks Beach, Sir William Harcourt, Lord Randolph Churchill and Mr. Goschen.

To write of the changes he witnessed would require the courage of Mr. Wells, but he saw in the happy days of 1874 an Income Tax of 2d. in the £1 and the prosperity of the country, and he lived to see a tax of 6s. in the £1 and the country weighed down by a gigantic and overwhelming debt, threatening bankruptcy.

In 1888 he attained to the high office of Assistant Secretary and Auditor of the Civil List, and succeeded Lord Welby as Permanent Secretary in the Department in 1894. To follow such a predecessor was no easy task, but imbued with the policy of his chiefs, by his ready intuition, his patience and tact, he succeeded in no ordinary degree in performing the duties that devolved upon him. The Treasury control in those days was a reality, and required judgment, intelli-

gence and good humour. The duty, which to a considerable extent consisted in saying "No" to all expenditure of a needless character, to carry with him the acquiescence of ever-changing Chancellors of the Exchequer, was no easy one, but he performed it with unfailing temper and was able to gain the goodwill of all conflicting elements with which he had to deal, and to convince the applicants that he was in the right.

The "Times," in an obituary notice, recalls an almost forgotten incident which occurred in 1900. Lord Salisbury, in one of his sarcastic moods, criticised with much severity the exercise of Treasury control, which could only be interpreted as a direct censure on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his subordinates. Sir Francis, secure in the unassailable position as guardian of the public purse, offered his resignation, but Lord Salisbury apologised. He stated in the House of Lords that the criticisms that he indulged in were not directed against the Chancellor of the Exchequer or Sir Francis, but to this day, says the "Times," it remains a mystery what Lord Salisbury thought the

precise Treasury offences were, and who were the offenders.

Apart from purely Treasury business Sir Francis was constantly called upon to advise on all reforms, changes and organisations and reorganisations connected with the Civil Service and on other subjects, including the question of maintaining a yearly expenditure of £12,000,000 on Army reserves for guns and warlike stores.

Sir Francis's retirement, after forty-seven years of arduous administrative work in the trammels of the Treasury, did not leave him idle, and he threw himself with undiminished vigour into the battle of Free Trade imperilled, as he thought, by the action of the Coalition Government. He was an active and useful member of the Free Trade Union, and chairman of the Cobden Club to the end.

He was chosen as British delegate to the International Railway Congress at Washington in 1906, and became a member of the Royal Commission on Waste of Stores in South Africa and on the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland. He was a member of the Senate of London University, and

chairman of the Finance Committee. He, with Lord Haldane, took a leading position in the formation of the College of Science, and was a commissioner of the Patriotic Fund. He was chosen a Progressive alderman on the County Council, where he did good service on various committees, and took an active part in the organisation of the Franco-British Exhibition at the White City. There were many other offices held by him unknown even to his intimate friends, but only to the indefatigable research of the "Times"; but who would not be proud of such a record of splendid public life?

Of his private life few of his old friends remain to say what one of them still lingering behind can testify to the honour of his friendship; generous acts known to him and secret from others dwell in his recollection; a delightful host, a charm of conversation untrammelled by officialism, a fund of humour, with perhaps a tinge of criticism only acting as a little salt, wholesome and never bitter.

What a type he has left behind him as a glory of the Civil Service—and a noble

example—which, if followed, may still maintain even in these days the reputation it has held in the past.

It requires some amount of courage to approach the penetration of the Heralds' College, but there are two men holding the position of the Garter King-at-Arms who were remarkable: Sir Albert Woods, who was connected with the College from his youth and passed through all the stages of promotion until he came to the highest post of Garter King-at-Arms. He was not possessed of any literary qualities, but as "ne sutor ultra crepidam"—his motto through life—he was an authority on all ceremonials and questions of heraldry and orders of knighthood, and was popular with Royalty. He was a member of countless honours, on the principle, I suppose, "that he who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

Sir Alfred Scott Gatty was a very different Herald King-at-Arms from his predecessor. He was a man of the highest possible culture, a musician and a patient painstaking archæologist and antiquarian, many volumes of his MS. being left to the College of

Heralds. All his qualities were invaluable in his office. Sir Alfred was a well-known and genial social figure, and his dinners in the old hall of the College were simply delightful. He had a strong family love of theatrical performance, and in his early days he had the proud distinction of entering into a theatrical engagement with Ristori; and later in life he often regretted that he had not entered the theatrical profession, which was adopted by his son. He was always keenly interested in the ceremonial side of his work, and in all the rehearsals of great historic events, such as the coronations of Kings Edward and George, he was able to impart much theatrical effect in grouping peers and great officials in the Abbey, which added to the beauty of the ceremonials. He always said that King Edward possessed a keen dramatic sense, but his greatest delight was in coaching the Prince of Wales. Sir Alfred had a genuine love of heraldry, and on one occasion he was complaining to Gilbert of his difficulties in providing arms and mottoes for newly made peers and baronets. He mentioned Sir Blundell Maple. "Nothing easier!" said

Gilbert. "For a coat-of-arms put Richard Cœur de Lion through the bars of his prison, and for a motto 'Blondel m'appelle.'"

Lady Gatty had a lovely voice, and Beerbohm Tree, hearing her sing, turned round to Gatty, saying: "Hark, the herald angel sings."



SIR ROBERT MORANT



CHAPTER XVI

SIR ROBERT MORANT

SIR ROBERT MORANT died in his fifty-seventh year, and by his death a very severe blow has been sustained by all classes of the community, for it is a mere statement of fact that no man in this country has made so profound a study of the problems of national health as he had, and no man had shown a greater aptitude for constructive organisation in this department of public life.

Sir Robert was often called a typical bureaucrat by those who did not know him intimately. In fact he was, first of all, an idealist, relentless, merciless perhaps, in his pursuit of that which he believed in, but ever more severe upon himself than upon others. Night after night, of recent years, he worked till the small hours of the morning, organising and planning on behalf of the Ministry of Health, which was largely his own creation, and to which he devoted himself heart and soul. These long hours and

the strain they involved undoubtedly wore him out. He has died, as he would have wished, a martyr to one of the strongest senses of duty which our public service has known.

Sir Robert Morant's career presents many of the features of romance. It may be said to have begun when he went out to Siam as a tutor to the Royal Household, and organised there a system of education which stands still as a monument to his ability. At that time he showed the remarkable aptitude for organisation which was later to carry him far, and also the power to read the minds of others which made his great project of a Ministry of Health a possibility. It was a natural evolution that he should pass from this small stage to the direction of education in England. Mr. Balfour's Government showed great discrimination when in 1902 it appointed him to administer the Education Act which aroused such fierce controversy between the various religious bodies and out of which the so-called "Passive Resistance" movement arose. Sir Robert administered the Act in spite of the most determined opposition.

More than that, he justified the Act in the eyes of most reasonable men. His wide and real knowledge, his force of character, his sympathy with all that was best in educational life and thought, triumphed over every obstacle.

Robert Laurie Morant was born on April 7, 1863, and was the son of the late Robert Morant, of Hampstead. He was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. At Oxford, where he had a hard struggle upon small means, he took a first class in the final school of Theology. When he left Oxford he went first to a famous preparatory school, Temple Grove, and left his mark upon its organisation. While still a very young man he went out to Siam as tutor to a nobleman there, and soon became tutor to the Prince and Royal Family. At the request of the King, he organised public education in that country, His scheme remains in marked contrast to the scheme of Indian education, which, in the view of many competent authorities, lacks its originality and practical character. His influence in Siam was so great that he was spoken of as " the Uncrowned King." Jealousies were

naturally aroused, and when the King fell ill and power passed out of his hands Morant returned to England. He now threw himself into social and educational work in East London. " Slumming " was popular then, but very different was this young worker from the host of dilettanti, who moved lightly from West to East. They adventured in many cases to prove a theory, he to construct one. His association with the Webbs sharpened the edge of his observation ; it did not lead him into the mistakes which others of the company made. He saw the virtue of Fabianism ; he also saw through its weaknesses. He came back from East London with the conviction that what had to be done must be done by men of affairs who had studied all the facts and understood all the people. He never lost this attitude. He had no patience with quackery in any form. The secret of his life-work was disclosed in his own phrase, " No detail is ever insignificant." It was his rooted belief that " great things always begin small, never with a flourish of trumpets." No man detested " the limelight," as he called it, more than Morant ; few men obtained more of it.

In 1895 he became Assistant Director of the newly instituted "Office of Special Inquiries and Reports" in the Education Department. Here he joined Sir Michael Sadler. His report on French primary schools which was drawn up at this time made a great impression and won him considerable fame. When the Unionist Government became committed to an education policy and their credit much involved in Education Bills for that purpose, Sir John Gorst took Morant as his private secretary, and henceforward the work of collecting information, and concentrating it on the material issues, fell mainly upon him. The story of the passing of the Act of 1902 is too long to repeat here. His share in it is one of the romances of the Civil Service; but there must be many still who, when they think of it, see again not only the brilliant duels between Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Arthur Balfour, but also the eager face "under the gallery" or the tall figure striding through the lobbies. In the last weeks of the Bill it became necessary to think of how the Act was to be carried out, or indeed ever brought into operation. Finally

Mr. Balfour decided that the only man who could do that was the man whose great constructive ability had made the Bill a possibility, and Morant became Acting Secretary of the Board of Education on November 1, 1902.

The Bill was then still in the House, and required every moment of his time. But the office had to be prepared for its passing, and Morant entered upon his work of organisation. By April 1, 1903, the Bill, and the London Bill that followed, had passed; Morant was Permanent Secretary of the Board, and the office had been divided into three main branches. The division has been criticised, but it was necessary at the time. There were three separate problems to be worked out, always in relation to the administrative organisation of the new local education authorities which had to be set up, got to work, and persuaded to co-operate with the Board.

In the field of elementary education the managers of the great mass of voluntary schools had to be constituted by reference to their trust deeds. The denominational and anti-denominational passions aroused by



SIR ROBERT MORANT



the Act had to be composed. Revolt was threatened on both sides, and passive resistance was added to the political vocabulary. The Education (Local Authority Default) Act of 1904 was a milestone on a long road of controversy which has happily ceased to trouble us.

The original function of the Science and Art Department had to be developed and the conception of secondary education disentangled from that of technical education and the miscellaneous activities of evening schools. The problem of higher education, as Morant saw it, was mainly one of organisation—central and local. "Get the organisation right and the rest will follow," he was always saying, and he would wish to be remembered in the province of education as the man who laid down the broad lines of organisation which would in the fullness of time bear fruit in a national system of education.

To some his insistence on the details of administrative organisation in his office appeared excessive ; but his plan was always the reflection and expression of some principle, some conviction as to the framework

within which the local authority, or official or teacher, would each do the best work most easily and effectively. No man was essentially less bureaucratic than Morant. The function of the official was to him that of enabling other men to do real work with the utmost scope for initiative and individuality.

When the fierce controversy over the National Insurance Act began Mr. Lloyd George called him to the Chairmanship of the Insurance Commission, and laid upon him in so doing a burden which would have broken many a smaller man. The Act was detested by half the people of the country. The doctors were in open revolt, the friendly societies were far from satisfied, powerful vested interests threatened their opposition. Sir Robert set himself to understand and guide. Within a comparatively short time a great change took place. The Act was administered. Doctors began to speak of Morant as " the biggest medical man of his time "—though he was not, of course, a medical man at all. His advice was eagerly sought by all sections of the profession throughout the difficult years of the war, and,

though he always disclaimed any professional knowledge, there is no doubt that many of the most momentous schemes arrived at by the Central Medical War Committee would have been less workable than they proved had his inspiration been lacking.

The medical profession is proverbially difficult to handle. Yet Morant handled it and won its confidence, even its affection. He saw its difficulties and sympathised with them. For years before any official action was taken he worked towards his great object—a Ministry of Health. On many occasions, just when hope that the Ministry would be set up seemed brightest, some obstacle came in the way and the scheme was dropped. Morant never wavered and never despaired. At last his patience prevailed, and the Prime Minister was won over to the scheme. From that hour no sort of doubt existed that Morant must be the first Secretary of the Ministry.

His last working thoughts were of the hospital crisis, which engaged his close attention. That he had a solution no one who knew him can doubt. Unhappily he has been cut off at a moment when his skill

and patience were most needed. Yet he leaves a great legacy and a great record of service.

He was a great civil servant, and his whole life was inspired by devotion to the public service. A man of warm domestic affections and a genius for friendship, he counted no sacrifice too great to make for the advancement of his public ideals. A furious and indefatigable worker, he more than once " dropped in his tracks." In the strategy of his public work he knew the value of reserves and did not waste them—for himself he kept no reserve of physical strength or energy, and spent all that was in him. He was a born fighter, but all the antagonisms which clustered round him, and they were many, arose out of some clash of views as to public policy or conduct. The men and institutions he handled were to him primarily instruments of public service, and all his conflicts he viewed as a struggle for some principle, and he saw principle in everything. This made his bigness. However much men disagreed with him, they could not but feel that he was fighting for something large, and by the

side of his largeness small men became smaller and were displeased. He was distrustful of men's motives, but no man trusted those whom he had proved more implicitly or was more loyal to them.

No man commanded more willing and laborious service from his colleagues by the force of example, by the vital interest which he imparted to the dullest detail, and by the warm personal affection which he inspired. His official life was an essay in the philosophy of the public service; he did not write it, he seldom expounded it, but he practised it, and what he did will last.



NO. 10 DOWNING STREET



CHAPTER XVII

NO. 10 DOWNING STREET

I CAN conceive no angle of the earth more full of historical recollections than 10 Downing Street. "Here," says John Morley, "was woven the artful fabric of policy and of party in which all the crafty calculations, the fierce passions, the glowing hopes, and confident ambitions of so many busy, powerful minds, have been exercised." All the great men of the days of the Georges must in their time have passed before the door of No. 10. There must have stood Sir Robert Walpole's chariot and Chatham's sedan-chair; while Horace Walpole himself saw those men who, as Macaulay says, were Whigs when it must have been as dangerous to be a Whig as a highwayman! Men who had been concealed in garrets and cellars after the Battle of Sedgemoor, and who had put their name to the declaration that they would live and die with the Prince and

Princess of Orange. Walpole's own Secretary to the Treasury, John Scrope, had fought for Monmouth at Sedgemoor, and in the disguise of a woman carried despatches between the Prince of Orange and the disaffected English peers. In 1724 he was appointed Secretary to the Treasury (at the age of sixty-two), and held the post till he died in harness at the age of ninety. His fidelity to Walpole brought him many enemies, and the Committee of Secrecy in 1742 threatened him with the Tower for refusing to give evidence as to his chief's disposal of Secret Service money. He replied that he did not care whether he spent the few months he had to live in the Tower or not, but that the last thing he would do was to betray the King, and next to the King the Earl of Orford.

I recollect in a witty speech at the Mansion House the American Minister describing Downing Street as the greatest street in the world, because it lay at the hub of the gigantic wheel which encircles the globe under the name of the British Empire; he laid claim to it as an American street because it originally belonged to one Down-

ing, a pupil educated in Scholâ Publicâ Primâ in the State of Massachusetts, as indeed it did. It is perhaps only a legend that Queen Anne presided over a meeting of the Cabinet in the house No. 10. But the real interest of the house began when it fell into the possession of the Crown, and George I bestowed it on the Hanoverian Minister, Baron Bothmar, who died there in 1731. At his death, George II offered it to the great minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who, as we all know, with a public spirit perhaps rarer in those days than it is now, refused it as a private gift, but accepted it to serve as an official residence in perpetuity for succeeding First Lords of the Treasury. Here Sir Robert took up his residence in 1735, and three years later Lady Walpole died there, being buried in Westminster Abbey, where there is a beautiful statue erected to her memory close to Henry VII's Chapel, where her husband's banner, as a Knight of the Bath, hangs; the passer-by may read there a long list of her virtues inscribed by Horace Walpole, who, a little later, laments the delightful rooms in 10 Downing Street, which he was so soon to

quit. Sir Robert Walpole for twenty years was Prime Minister, and when in 1742 he ceased to hold office, he removed, much to his son's regret, to Arlington Street, where he died in 1745.

He was succeeded by Lord Wilmington, who was celebrated in verse as—

> "That old, dull unimportant Lord
> Who at the longed-for Money Board
> Sits first, but does not lead.
> His younger brethren all things make,
> So that the Treasury's like a snake,
> And the tail moves the head."

But he never resided there, having lent the house, as Horace Walpole says, to Mrs. Sandys. Then came what was called the "Broadbottom and short administration" of Lords Granville and Bath—1746—which lasted, as the wits of the day said, for forty-eight hours seven minutes and eleven seconds.

Sir Robert Walpole was considered by historians to be the originator of Cabinet Councils, as we understand them now; for, before he was First Lord, Queen Anne presided over meetings of a Committee of the Privy Council, which were always held



NO. 10 DOWNING STREET



on a Sunday, and also attended debates in the House of Lords. She was the last of our Sovereigns who in person attended such councils; for it would have been impossible for the early Georges to preside over deliberations which were conducted in what to them was an unknown tongue.

These meetings were held in the Cockpit, a part of Whitehall Palace, where the Treaty of Utrecht was disclosed to the Lords of the Council, and where communications from the Sovereign were made. Here the Treasury was first lodged by William III in 1697, and for a century later letters were not infrequently dated from the Cockpit. Of that building little trace remains, but in a dull and gloomy passage leading from Whitehall to the Treasury Chambers there are still two Tudor windows, the only remains of the old Whitehall Palace. The Cockpit was partly in the present garden of 10 Downing Street and partly on the site of the present Treasury Chambers. Underneath, in what is now a coal-cellar, the cocks are said to have been kept. There, to this day, is to be seen a leaden cistern bearing the cypher of Charles II.

I cannot trace accurately where Cabinets were held after the Cockpit. No place could have been more interesting than this ; for there Oliver Cromwell had lived before the death of King Charles, and after the Restoration it became the residence of General Monk, who was at the same time Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of all the Land Forces in the three kingdoms, First Commissioner of the Treasury, and Commander of the Fleet of England, probably the only subject who was addressed as Father by his Sovereign. Afterwards it became the residence of Princess Anne.

Sir Edward Hertslet, a great authority, says that Cabinets were held in Cleveland Row, afterwards in a private house leased in Downing Street till 1861, and then in Whitehall Gardens, pending the erection of the new Foreign Office ; but this does not tally with my own recollection of Cabinets in the old Foreign Office, where they certainly met till the close of the Crimean War. A friend who was then private secretary to Lord Panmure at the War Office told me how, when the news of the fall of Sevastopol arrived, he ran across to the

Foreign Office, where he was told by the messenger that he could not go up the old staircase, as it was forbidden. "I pushed by," he says, "went up and knocked at the door myself, which was opened by Lord Clarendon. Palmerston, on hearing the news, gave a view-holloa you might have heard across the Park."

Lord Hammond was a great stickler for Cabinets being held in the Foreign Office, but in Lord Clarendon's absence at Vienna, after the close of the war, they were summoned to Downing Street, where they continued to be held, I believe, during the building of the new Foreign Office.

The first minister after Walpole who lived in No. 10 was Lord North, who never would allow himself to be called Prime Minister. When he assumed office he had little prospects of an enduring administration, for he had to face the opposition of Chatham, Rockingham, and Grenville; nevertheless he moved into the official residence, which he inhabited from 1770 to 1783. During the Gordon riots his house was attacked, and yet he was said to have become so attached to the room he inhabited,

that after he had ceased to be First Lord he wandered into it, and sat down in his old accustomed seat, much to the astonishment of the Treasury officials.

It was to this house that Lord Chatham, after his dramatic fainting-fit in the House of Lords, was carried on his way to Hayes Place, where he died. His son used the house as his residence, and counted all days lost that were not spent there. He and Lady Hester Stanhope, his eccentric niece, kept house together, and built what is now called the banqueting room and the fine kitchen under it. "I let her do as she pleases," said Pitt, "for if she were resolved to cheat the devil, she could do it." She became the dispenser of much patronage in 1804, and was practically the sole Secretary of State for the Department of Treasury banquets.

Lord Grey was the next First Lord who inhabited the house, and he lived there through all the stormy times of the Reform Bill. We all know the engraving of poor Haydon's picture of the aged statesman, sitting over the drawing-room fire with the underwritten words: "Shall I resign?" But history cannot be written from pictures,

which are very often the product of the artist's fertile imagination. I have seen a coloured engraving representing a Cabinet Council, at which the Lord Chancellor in his robes and wig was sitting beside William IV discussing the Reform Bill.

Lord Goderich, during his short administration, moved into No. 10, and here was born his son, the present Lord Ripon. His mother was nervous previous to her confinement, and had all the doors taken off their hinges, lest any of them should slam during her illness.

Sir Robert Peel never moved from his house in Whitehall to take up his residence in Downing Street, though he transacted his official business there. It is not so very long ago—indeed I am told as lately as 1893-4—that a charge used to appear in the annual estimates presented to Parliament, for a small annuity for the sweeper who kept the crossing clean, so that the Prime Minister should not dirty his boots on his passage from Whitehall to the Treasury.

In Peel's day Cabinets were more frequent than they are now ; peers, as Mr. Gladstone

once told me, were not summoned to Cabinets on Saturdays, on which days arrangements only for the business in the House of Commons in the coming week were discussed. Had this rule been in force in Sir Robert Walpole's days, he only and his First Lord of the Admiralty would have been summoned; while Pitt would only have summoned himself.

Cabinet dinners, which were in full force up to Lord Aberdeen's time, were discontinued by Lord Palmerston. I can well imagine how they offended his social instincts, for what can be duller or more tedious than, after the day's work is over, to fight all the old battles again with the same colleagues at dinner! Indeed, nine times out of ten, men-dinners are lugubrious ceremonies. If the company is clever, jealousies spring up, and men who are brilliant conversationalists where women are, miss the charm and sparkle of their presence and the desire to please which is wanting among men alone. Disraeli wisely said, "There are many dismal things in middle life, and a dinner of only men is among them."

The discontinuance of these dinners, too, prevented the possibility of another Cato Street conspiracy, at the time when the whole Cabinet was to have been blown up at Lord Harrowby's in Grosvenor Square.

Lord Palmerston, riding down to Cabinets on his old grey horse to the little door of the Treasury Garden, rarely remained there, even for official purposes, preferring to transact all his business at his own house by means of papers sent to and fro in locked boxes.

In 1868 Mr. Disraeli held a meeting of his party there, and subsequently, as Lord Beaconsfield, lived there ; but the humble surroundings which had been sufficient for Walpole, Pitt, and Grey were not considered worthy of the author of "Lothair," and in 1874 the cultured taste of Mr. Mitford, then Secretary of the Board of Works, was called in to redecorate the house throughout.

In was one day in 1872 that I was summoned to Downing Street, and on my arrival I was surprised to find Mr. Gladstone in the garden with Sir Henry Storks and Sir Frederick Abel, who had promised to demonstrate the art of felling trees noiselessly

by gun-cotton. A mast had been planted in the ground with a necklace of gun-cotton around it, which at the proper time was to be exploded. Mr. Ayrton, then First Commissioner of Works, who was not a scientific believer, was protesting against the experiment, but on Sir Frederick's assurance that nobody would be "one penny the worse," the gun-cotton was exploded with a terrific report, which was heard in Hyde Park. I found myself under a shower of glass, which had fallen from the skylight of the First Lord's house, and all the adjoining windows were smashed.

There was one person who rejoiced—that was the triumphant Ayrton. Theories were exploded as well as gun-cotton.

On Saturday, June 15, 1872—a hot day, for we had hot days then!—the Cabinet was summoned at eleven o'clock, to await the decision of the Alabama Court from Geneva. After they had been waiting for some hours, Lord Granville came to my room and said: "If we all sit together much longer, doing nothing, we shall, in the nature of things, quarrel. Can you get me a chess-board?" This I did, and the Cabinet all went out on

the " tarrass " and watched a chess tournament between Lord Granville and Mr. Forster—the only time, probably, when an accurate picture of a Cabinet was drawn from life ; for the sharp eye of Mr. Fairfield had seen and seized his opportunity of making an accurate drawing from his room in the Colonial Office.

Living in Carlton House Terrace, Mr. Gladstone did not consider that he would gain much in time or convenience by migrating to Downing Street, so he thought it better that I should live there, and 10 Downing Street became our home—a home possessing peculiar attractions for my wife and me, not only as having been originally given to my great-great-grandfather, Sir Robert Walpole, but because she was born there, Captain George Barrington, her father, who was a Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Grey's Government, having married the daughter of Lord Grey. Curiously enough, her brother, Charles Barrington, became Lord Palmerston's secretary, and was the next person who lived there, and then, in 1869, we occupied the house during Mr. Gladstone's great administration.

From 10 Downing Street, in 1879, Disraeli once wrote to Cardinal Manning: "I have held eight Cabinets in a week, a feat unprecedented in the annals of Downing Street. Sir Robert Peel once held four, but they were not so tranquil as ours."

Cabinets have no local habitation. I see them in old days meeting everywhere. In Bertram Currie's house in Combe Wood is a brass tablet recording how a Cabinet was held there during a visit of Mr. Gladstone's. Another Cabinet which I recollect was adjourned from the room in Downing Street to the Garden terrace.

To all of us the Cabinet room was a sort of political temple; but to a famous old office-keeper, Appleton, who had lived to see so many administrations, it was a veritable holy of holies.

"Come in here, sir, if you please," he one day said to a high official in the Treasury, Lord Welby, "the table had to be enlarged and see what the Board of Works has done; they have put a leaf made of deal in the middle of the mahogany table—is that respectful?" My economist friend suggested that the green cloth would cover

it. All he could say was: "Is that respectful?"

When Mr. Gladstone returned in 1892, he found it difficult to hear at the long table in the accustomed room, and the captain's biscuits and carafe of water, which are granted by a grateful country to its ministers, were taken upstairs into what was called the Deputation room, and I have in my possession a plan, drawn by Mr. Gladstone himself, showing the position of the table and how his Cabinet was to be arranged around it.

In 1894 he attended his Cabinet for the last time. He sat, as John Morley in his wonderful biography tells us, composed and still as marble; the emotion of his colleagues did not affect him as them. He followed the words of acknowledgment and farewell in a little speech of four or five minutes, his voice unbroken and serene, the tone low, grave, and steady—and then he said: "God bless you all."

Lord Rosebery continued the arrangement until he made way for Lord Salisbury, who reverted to the old plan, which still exists, of holding his Cabinets in the new

Foreign Office, while Mr. Balfour came as tenant of the old house. To those who have never seen the house I may perhaps quote a book which was published in the year of Waterloo. Nightingale, in his "London and Middlesex," describes—

"Downing Street as a narrow, mean-looking street, but opening at the top into a handsome though small square, in which is the residence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister. This house has nothing in its exterior or interior of peculiar merit, except it be the excellent taste and beauty manifested in the furniture, decorations, paintings, library, etc. Nothing, however, appears to be superfluous or unnecessarily expensive; a stranger who visits the houses of some of our very first public officers and political characters would not suppose that the resources of the country are at any time in a very flattering state, or he would conclude that a spirit of parsimony had seized the whole nation. One would have thought that the official residence of such a person as the first minister and chief director in the affairs of the revenue would have had

a commanding and conspicuous situation, and have been adorned with some emblems of our national greatness, or some intimations of our rank among the nations of Europe. Instead of this, it is hidden in a corner, and cannot be approached by the public except through one of the meanest-looking streets of the metropolis. Indeed, there seems to be a culpable neglect and want of laudable ambition in this respect, pervading even the government itself."

Perhaps Mr. Nightingale would now be satisfied, were he alive, if he were to see the building he despised ornamented as it was in the time of the flag mania, in defiance of all architectural rules, with a ridiculous flagstaff.

No sketch, however slight, should pass over in silence the pictures collected in the First Lord's house. They are few but very interesting—of men mainly distinguished in finance. Mr. Scharf, then the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, was the first, I believe, to identify and classify them. I fancy this was in Mr. Gladstone's last Government. No connection with finance,

however, can be traced in the portrait by Lely of Lord Maynard, who carries the staff of the Comptroller of the Household ; how he came to an honoured place in Downing Street cannot be discovered. Then there is a portrait of Thomas, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, Lord High Treasurer and Treasurer of the Exchequer, whose name furnished the first letter of the famous Cabal. A fine full-length picture of Richard Weston, Earl of Portland, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1620, Treasurer of the Exchequer in 1624, and Lord High Treasurer in 1628, until he was created Earl of Portland in 1633, is the centre figure of the panel at the end of the room. He wears a black suit with a short mantle, with a white lace circular ruff. He holds in his hand a wand of office and wears the Order of the Garter suspended by a blue ribbon. It is a fine picture, painted not by, but after, Vandyke. Burne-Jones considered it as an example of how a great artist influenced the painters of his day.

Then, over the chimney-piece, is a fine portrait, by Van Loo, of Sir Robert Walpole, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor

of the Exchequer from 1721 to 1742, wearing the embroidered robe of his office. The broad blue ribbon of the Garter, so rarely bestowed on a commoner, crosses his dark-brown undercoat. His right hand holds erect the ceremonial embroidered purse of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think Sir Robert must have had a vain appreciation of the beauty of his hands, as in so many of his portraits they are placed in very prominent positions.

There is a bust portrait of Sir John Lowther, who was First Lord of the Treasury in 1691, painted by a French artist, Hyacinthe François Rigaud, which was presented by the Earl of Lonsdale as late as 1826. Near it there is a portrait of Sydney Godolphin, Earl of Godolphin, who was Lord High Treasurer from 1702 to 1710—life-size to the waist, carrying his wand of office. This was painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and was presented by the Countess de Grey in 1827.

Then there is a portrait of Perceval, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1807 and Prime Minister in 1809, by George Francis Joseph. Mr. Perceval was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons in May

1812. Another portrait is of Henry Booth, afterwards Baron Delamere, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1689, and was created Earl of Warrington in 1690. The presentment is of a young man, with long flowing hair hanging below his shoulders, and wearing black and polished metal armour—I suppose a kind of fancy dress. This is also painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, and has been engraved by John Smith. Thomas Osborne, the first Duke of Leeds, who was Lord High Treasurer from 1673 to 1679, is painted by John Greenhill, while Henry Pelham, who was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1743 to 1754, is painted by Van Loo, in his official robes, with the embroidered purse of the Seal of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone's portrait, a copy of Millais' picture belonging to Lord Rosebery, hangs appropriately on the walls. It was presented to that historic house by his private secretaries on his retirement. It is to be regretted that more pictures of those who have held such high offices should not have a place in a building so appropriate to them ; and it is to be hoped that in future,

at any rate, such portraits may be forthcoming for the benefit of posterity.

It is impossible to think of the number of Prime Ministers and First Lords that have existed since the house became their property in Walpole's time, without being struck with the mutability of human ambitions, successes, and failures. Behold what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue ! Since that time what changes have not convulsed and passed over Europe : the overthrow of thrones and dynasties ; and we may be thankful that our constitution has been so firmly built on a rock as to be independent of the rise and fall of ministers and the ebb and flow of politics.

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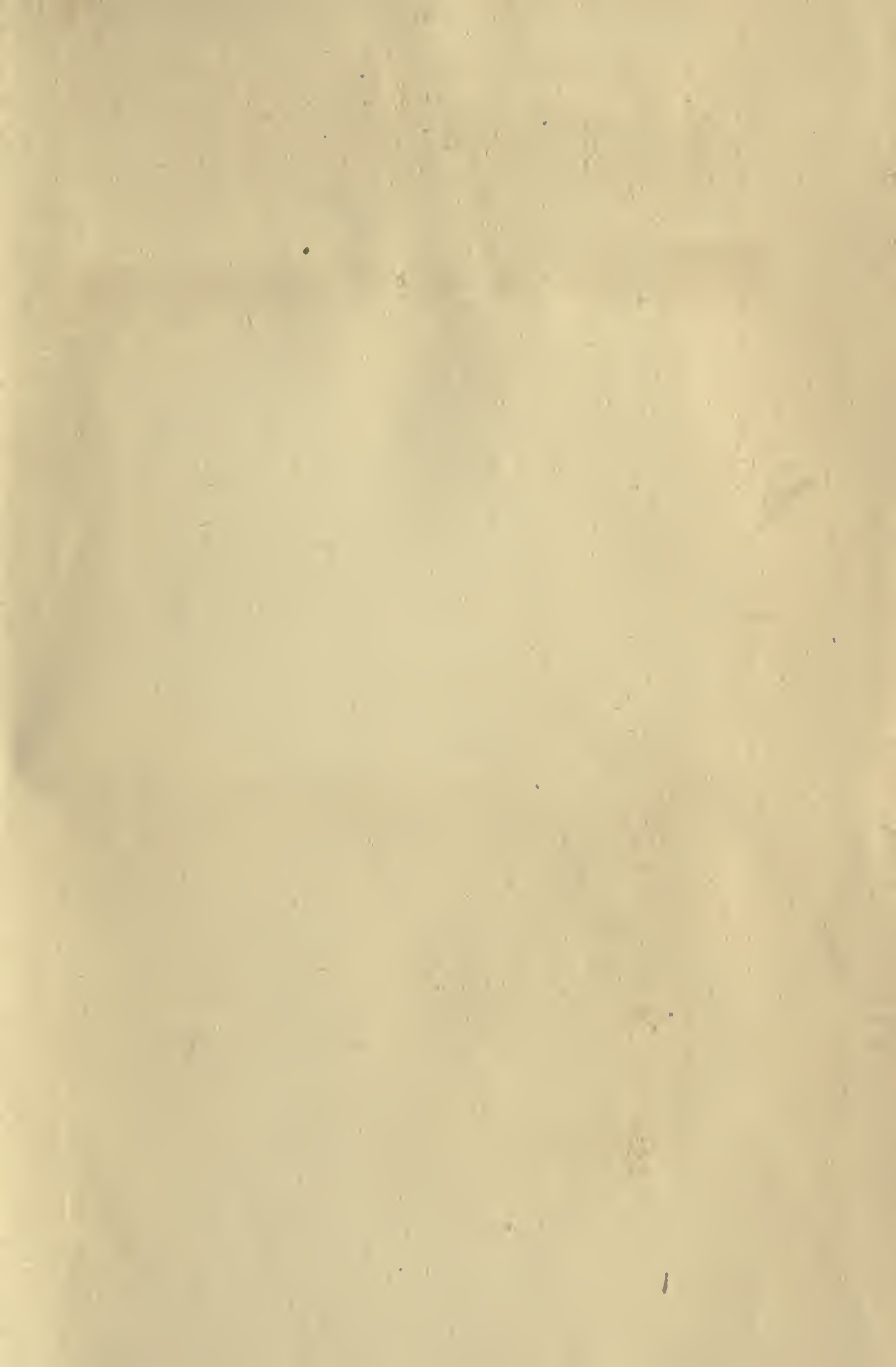
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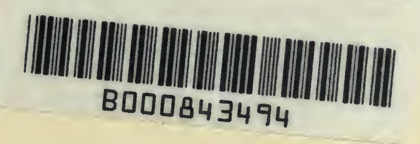
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